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RAMBLES BY RIVERS.

THE AVON.

By JAMES THORNE.

The Church Avenue, Stratford.

LONDON:
CHARLES KNIGHT & CO., LUDGATE STREET.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

THE quiet little town of Stratford-upon-Avon receives more pilgrims from all lands than many a brilliant city rich in palaces and temples. The neighbourhood of this town has nothing very striking in its scenery; but many a wayfaring enthusiast, with knapsack on his back, may be found tracing the course of the "lucid Avon," or climbing the wooded hills which overlook the hamlets of this richly cultivated district. The chief charm of this smiling country lies in the memory of one who was born and who died in this quiet little town—whose parents and children here also dwelt —who cultivated some of the fields which lie around his birthplace—but whose name has gone forth through all countries as the greatest name amongst the sons of England. A little volume referring to these pleasant and memorable places, as well as to other interesting associations of "the Avon," may offer a fitting companionship to the wanderer by Avon's side, and be acceptable also to many who may never have the opportunity of looking upon the scenes where Shakspere had

"his daily walks, and ancient neighbourhood."

The beautiful sketches of Mr. Harvey, with some few additional ones by the author of this 'Ramble' (to the fidelity of which the editor of this Series can bear testimony), will convey a better notion of these localities than any verbal pictures, however carefully executed.

C. K.

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RAMBLES BY RIVERS.

THE AVON.

CHAPTER I.

THE SOURCE.

In the following pages it will be my aim to point out the various objects and places of interest that occur along the banks of the Avon; to call attention to whatever is deserving of regard either in art or nature; and to add such information respecting them as may seem necessary to illustrate their character, or as promises to amuse or guide one who will either in fact or fancy accompany the author in a ramble beside this stream. I shall, then, assume the position of a companion who has before travelled over the road, and is ready to talk of the several places as he comes to them, of the people who have dwelt, and of the events that have occurred in them. Adopting a companionable manner and licence, I shall speak freely of whatever subject arises, without much heeding whether the tone be serious or sportive, fully confiding in your candour and patience; and I shall, I fear, much need both: for rambling beside a river we

must touch on many things; we cannot confine ourselves to any one class or range of objects, and we are likely to differ in opinion upon some of them. However, I am disposed to account this necessity for looking at a diversity of matters an advantage more than counterbalancing any danger of a disagreement about them. We are all too apt to let our thoughts move in a circle. We too often attend merely to what interests our class, or sect, or party. Now, all party spectacles produce a slight refraction, or aberration; every object seen through them is a little a-twist, or out of its place. Some tiny feature, at the least, will be a little enlarged, or else pushed out of sight altogether. Our river may teach us better than this: he has no antipathies; he has his likings, but he turns aside from none.

> "But, when his fair course is not hindered,
> He makes sweet music with the enamell'd stones,
> Giving a gentle kiss to every sedge
> He overtaketh in his pilgrimage."

Our ramble is not to be a very short one, nor, as we shall find, are the subjects that will arise of slight consideration. Let us, as travellers should before commencing their journey, look whither our course lies. The Avon rises at Naseby, in Northamptonshire, touches on Leicestershire, then winds away through a good portion of the counties of Warwick and Worcester, and unites with the Severn at Tewkesbury in Gloucestershire. Tewkesbury is, in a direct line, about fifty-five miles south-west of Naseby. But the course of the river is very devious; and though it flows, on the whole, in a south-westerly direction, it does so by no

means uniformly. On its way it passes by Rugby, Warwick, Stratford-upon-Avon, Evesham, and Pershore, before it arrives at Tewkesbury.

Although the Avon is one of the most famous of our rivers, it is by no means one of the most beautiful. Its interest arises mainly from its associations, but in them it is alone among English rivers —perhaps among the rivers of the world. Some there are—wise men too in their generations—who look with contempt upon such associations, and would almost deem themselves degraded were they to permit their feelings to be excited by visiting the birth-places or the graves of the mighty, or the spots that have been sanctified by noble deeds. May such apathy never be ours! Rather let us cherish every feeling that leads the mind to venerate the intellectually or morally beautiful or great, as among the worthiest in the human breast; and cast aside none of the aids to a closer union with them. There is a real tangible advantage, too, in such associations. To stand thus where one, who has done so nobly, was born, dwelt, or acted, seems to bring us into closer contact with him. A livelier and vivider conception of the man seems to arise; and we not only come near, but hold converse—a closer converse than in his pages, though perhaps an humbler—with the master mind; because we, in a manner, approach his human nature, his homely state. It is not a shadow or a name only, but a real human being, we now see. It is the next thing to knowing the living man; and what freshness and life are imparted to the page by being conversant with its author, all know who have had experience of it. And who has not experienced

this in some degree? Who has not, in looking on the portrait of his favourite author, felt that he knows him better? Who, that has read Shakspere, does not long for his true portraiture? And in treading in his footsteps a similar feeling is aroused, but deeper and more impressive. We cannot afford to part with these feelings. We do well to cherish them as among the most precious of the intellectual gifts. Feelings not sterile, but yielding richest fruit.

Of such associations abundant will be the harvest we may gather beside our stream; and though, it may be, we shall speak of them unworthily—and to speak worthily of them were a task for the wisest—yet as well as it is given us to speak we will. What scenes and men are before us! Naseby, Evesham, Tewkesbury, Stratford: Wiclif, Shakspere, Butler. Places among the most celebrated in our history, and each, in the events connected with it, productive of large results. Men each among the notablest of his age and country—each embodying and giving expression to its thought—one the notablest of any age, and destined to shape the thoughts of men through many ages.

While, then, the associations connected with the Avon must be most prominent, we shall find enough of loveliness, and even of grandeur in its scenery, to afford abundant and substantial pleasure. Let us, therefore, without more delay prepare to follow his guidance as

> "By many winding nooks he strays
> With willing sport,"

not "to the wild ocean," but to his "Sabrina fair."

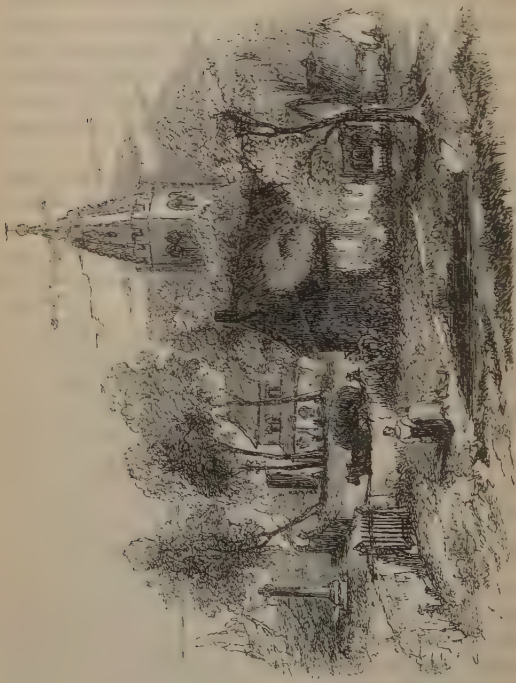
Our river, watering spots so dear to every Englishman—to all men—has its birth-place in one that no Englishman can visit without deep emotion —Naseby. That portion of our history is, unhappily, so entangled with the threads of party spirit, that it is scarcely possible to touch any circumstance connected with it without disturbing some; but whatever opinion may be formed as to the superior merit of either of the parties engaged in that fierce struggle, or even though the mind may not go entirely with either, scarcely any can have considered it without having arrived at the conclusion that the battle of Naseby was productive of greater results to this country than any other since the battle of Hastings. "Immediately," as Clarendon said, truly enough, "there was lost the king and the kingdom in it;" while the ulterior effect has been to colour, if not to change, the whole after-course of our history, and to set a-going a series of events, of which the end is not yet perhaps near. The source of the Avon is some little distance from Naseby field: we shall look at the village first, and then examine the site of the battle as we proceed onwards.

Naseby itself is as rude and out-of-the-way a place as you are likely to meet with in the midland counties: a village of mud huts, away from any main road, and some five or six miles from any town. You may best reach it from the Crick station of the Birmingham Railway, by a pleasant road of eight or nine miles' length. The pedestrian may follow some bye-roads, leaving West Haddon on his right, and thence by Thornley and Cold-Ashby, where he will cross the Holyhead

road, and a lane will lead him directly to the village; the truncated spire of Naseby church serving as a landmark from Cold-Ashby. If he wishes to explore the battle-field at his leisure, Naseby will serve as a resting-place, there being two little inns in it, at either of which he may take up his quarters for the night. About fifty years ago a 'History of Naseby' was published by its vicar, the Rev. John Mastin, a tolerably full and careful account of the place. The good author has a little quiet enthusiasm in him, and relates all he knew, or could collect about his parish, with a direct and undoubting earnestness, that makes his book more pleasant reading than such books generally are. He liked the place and the people, and the people liked him. He does not fail to point out their faults, but it is in a gentle manner, such as we may suppose Dr. Primrose would have used in descanting on his parishioners. It is pleasing to find his memory cherished still among them. Except the battle, there is nothing of importance to record, however, in the history of the parish. Placed on some of the highest table-ground in the island, it affords, from many parts, very extensive, if not very remarkable views. Its church is ancient, but not important as an architectural object. The spire has a somewhat singular appearance, terminating abruptly, as if the apex had been at some time knocked off; but it is believed that it was left so originally, from a fear that the tower was not strong enough to allow of its being carried any higher. It is surmounted by a large copper ball, that was originally brought from Boulogne by Sir Gyles Allerton, when that place was taken by the

English in the reign of Henry VIII. So elevated is the ground here, that from the spire Boston deeps, in Lincolnshire, sixty miles distant, may, according to Mr. Mastin, be seen on a clear day. In the late Ordnance Survey, reflectors were placed on the spire, and it formed a rather important point in their investigations. The churchyard is, like most in these parts, raised above the street, and open. There is a gate at one end, but towards the street it is quite unprotected.

Naseby was once a market-town, and the market-cross still stands near the church; but it is now a poor place, consisting of a few clay huts, which look just like those which Rushworth figured at the foot of his plan of the fight two centuries ago. The houses are scattered very irregularly about the village; the cottages are thatched, but not with the neat-looking thatch you see on a Hampshire or Berkshire cottage. The walls of almost all the houses are clay, and are composed in a manner of which the description is worth quoting. "The houses are principally built with a kind of Kealy earth, dug near the village:" this is mixed with straw, and the walls thus formed are very lasting. "There are walls in some of the houses said to be two hundred years old built of this earth; and were they drawn over with lime-mortar, and marked or lined to appear as stone-work, their appearance would be respectable:" as it is, the vicar thinks they are by no means respectable; "for, instead of this, the new coat which they have once a year consists of *cow-dung*, spread upon them to dry for firing." This coat, one of the villagers told me, when scraped off against the winter, used



Naseby.—The Source.

to be stacked up in front of the houses, as coals are seen in the North, and dung-heaps in the South of England. This unsavoury compost is now no longer spread yearly over the house-fronts. Refinement has reached Naseby. Is not this custom unique, or confined to this locality? I have not met with it anywhere else, nor heard allusion to it.

According to the vicar, Naseby is a remarkably healthy place; the inhabitants living, in fact, to be so old as to be known as "the Naseby children;" indeed, he adds, they do frequently become, by age, a second time children: as a proof of which he relates, that "one, a farmer named Corby, at seventy years of age, had an entirely new and regular set of teeth cut, which grew to a proper size, and continued firm to the time of his death; so good, to use his son's expression (now living, 1792), that he would quarrel with his family for the crusts." This crusty old fellow "died in the ninety-fourth year of his age." Our vicar further tells us that the natives "speak a kind of provincial dialect, and in general vociferate very loudly;" which, as, according to him, they are a little too fond of tippling, must be rather inconvenient. As the houses have changed, however, so may the manners. Formerly there was a good deal of worsted stuff spun here "at the large wheel," especially the stuffs called harreteens and tammies; but this branch of industry was decaying when Mastin wrote, and is quite lost now, and no other manufacture supplies its place.

Avon-well, as the source of our river is called, lies in the garden of the little inn opposite Naseby

church.* The spring flows into a small circular pool, which, a few years back, it was resolved to adorn and render sufficiently smart for the birth-bed of so famous a river. A plaster swan was procured, and the water made to spout from his bill into the little pool, which also received various graceful trimmings. The well was separated by a wall from the public road, but in order that the improvements might be enjoyed by all, iron railings were substituted for the "Kealy earth," opposite to the swan fountain. But unluckily, though, as was said, refinement has penetrated to Naseby, the natives were not prepared to appreciate such an innovation. The bird's head was speedily discovered to be a capital mark, and, as Naseby men are as proud of their skill in stone-throwing as Kentuckians are of theirs in rifle-shooting, its head soon got knocked off, and the limpid element in consequence flowed rather ungracefully from its neck. Other mishaps followed, and finally the poor bird was flung off its perch into the water, by which, as plaster swans are not good swimmers, it derived small benefit. Now, in this present spring of 1845, it looks very desolate. Headless, and with one of its wings broken (to say nothing of the loss

* Leland's notice, in his 'Itinerary,' of the source of the Avon, deserves quoting, if only as a little sample of the rugged English of the time (1540–50):—"The hedde of Avon river visiteth (riseth) a little sidenham of Gilesborough (Guildsborough) village, and cummeth by it there, first receiving a bottom." That which Leland calls the head of the Avon is another branch of it which rises near Cold-Ashby, not far from Guildsborough, but it is not considered the main branch.

of its feet) the poor swan crouches down in a pitiable manner in the dirt *beside* the pond, while the water trickles lazily from a shabby wooden spout; and the Avon-well itself is covered with dead green duck-weed, and surrounded by cabbages. This ought not to be. It is utterly impossible for the most resolute to be sentimental over it. For us there is plainly nought but to leave it, with a hope that some one may be led by our lament to look after and remedy the dismal state of *this* swan of Avon.

CHAPTER II.

THE BATTLE-FIELD.

From Avon-well the rivulet flows in a north-westerly direction, skirting the field of the great battle. This field is about a mile from the village, and is on still higher ground. Mastin says that in a clear day he has seen, at different times in the day as the light served, thirty-nine or forty parish churches from one station, seen them and counted them with the naked eye. The site of the battle is a wide and long stretch of ground, with a gentle slope from the northern and southern extremities to the lower space between. There are some depressions in the field, but it is not greatly broken, though somewhat of its ruggedness is probably now worn off. At the time of the fight it was an open heath, and remained so till the present century—a rough, undulating stretch of high moor-land, covered with gorse and fern and scattered bramble-bushes. About five-and-twenty years back it was enclosed, and is now cultivated; but from the lowness of the hedges and the nature of the place, the view over it, from either side, is much less obstructed than might be expected. Still it would probably be best explored on a clear winter's day, when the absence of foliage and of crops would aid the imagination in restoring it to its original state. I visited it on such a day, and was able to explore it thoroughly and satisfac-

torily. Rushworth, in his 'Collections,' has given a plan of the battle, drawn up, he says, from the papers of the parliamentary generals, which were intrusted to him for the purpose by the Parliament, together with those of Lord Ashley, who prepared the plan for the disposition of the King's troops, and whose papers fell into their hands when he was taken in a skirmish soon afterwards. Having carefully examined this plan, with such other documents, contemporary and otherwise, as I could obtain, before visiting Naseby, I fancied I should be able to understand with some certainty the order of the battle, but I had not anticipated recalling the event so vividly. There clearly was the hill along whose brow was stretched the king's army; here was the strong line of the parliamentary forces; down this declivity the forlorn hope marched to meet the fiery cavaliers; yonder, on our left, dashed forward the gallant band of Rupert to make one of his furious mad charges. But let us, as we are here looking over the ground, see whether we cannot obtain an idea of the battle, by aid of those who wrote when it was fresh in memory. Naseby fight has been often described, but here its repetition may be forgiven.

The battle occurred in the middle of June, 1645. Charles was at Harborough when he heard that Fairfax had drawn off from Oxford, and he resolved to advance towards him. The king and all about him were in high spirits, fully believing that the parliament army was in a disorganized state, that the new model which had just been adopted was unsuccessful, and that he had but to appear, and victory would at once of necessity declare for him. Charles advanced to Daventry, where he waited

several days for more correct intelligence of the movements of the enemy. Intelligence came, but of another kind than he expected. Fairfax he learned was close at hand; he had reached Northampton with an army more considerable than had been reported to him, and in good condition. This being the case, he resolved to fall back upon Harborough, and from thence proceed as rapidly as he might to Leicester. Meanwhile Fairfax had not been idle; anticipating an engagement,* he had written to the Parliament, requesting that Cromwell might be spared from his attendance at the House of Commons, in order to take the command of the horse, an engagement being likely to happen speedily. On Friday (June 13) a council of war is summoned to determine what it is best to do. While the debate is going forward a loud noise is heard in the camp. Cromwell is come! and "the horse give a mighty shout for joy of his coming to them."† He has brought, too, seven hundred of his own Ironsides with him—good men all—but himself a host. There is little hesitancy now. Onward is the word. An alarm soon reaches Harborough that the Roundheads are at hand—that they are quartered within six miles. No chance of reaching Leicester now: that is plain enough, whatever else is doubtful. "A council was presently called, and the former resolution of retiring presently laid aside, and a new one as quickly taken

* So Rushworth, but Whitelock says that the letters were "from the chief officers of horse under Fairfax;" whoever it was wrote them, it is certain that the troops of horse were very anxious for his presence.

† 'A more exact and perfect Relation of the great Victory (by God's Providence) obtained,' &c. Lond. 1645.

'to fight,' to which there was always an immoderate appetite, when the enemy was within any distance. They would not stay to expect his coming, but would go back to meet him. And so, in the morning early, being Saturday the fourteenth of June, all the army was drawn up, upon a rising ground of very great advantage, about a mile south from Harborough (which was left at their back), and there put in order to give or receive the charge." (Clarendon.) But they did not stay there. Fairfax had set out from his quarters by daybreak, and, after a march of an hour or two, sees some of the king's troops on the high grounds before him.* Charles had been led to move his troops from their former and, as it should seem, preferable position, owing to his misconceiving the purport of some movements on the part of his adversary, and now had scarcely time to arrange his army before the enemy made signs of attacking him.

The position which the king's army had now taken is on the north-eastern side of Naseby field; the parliament's army occupies the hill about half a mile on the south. The deep hollow is between them. The order of battle is soon formed. On the king's side, Prince Rupert has the command of the right wing, Sir Marmaduke Langdale of the left, while the main body is commanded by Lord Ashley; the king being with the reserves, and having Lord Lindsay, Sir George Lisle, and others

* There is some hopeless confusion here between the various accounts of the victorious party on the one hand and Clarendon on the other—neither hours nor movements can be made to agree, and it seems as though here, as elsewhere, Clarendon had not taken much trouble about the exact veracity of his narrative.

with him. On the opposite side, Cromwell commands the right, and Ireton the left wing; the centre is under the charge of the General (Fairfax) himself and Major Skippon; Rainsborough, Hammond, and Pride commanding the reserves. Each party forms a line stretching across the field; the order of each is similar—the infantry being in the centre, with the cavalry as wings. Yonder hill, where the king's troops are, is Broad Moor; they have a warren on their left. This, whereon the parliament's army is ranged, is Mill Hill, that Fenny Hill on the left, a troop of Ireton's dragoons is behind the hedge that divides Naseby and Sulby Honours. Both armies are well placed; it is clear, though, that Cromwell has therein the advantage. He has secured such a position as to screen a considerable part of his men by means of the broken ground from the observation of the enemy, while he commands a full view of them, and can detect at once all their movements. In numbers there is little difference between them. In courage they are equal, but not in confidence. That "mighty shout" of the horse yesterday, when "Fairfax's invincible lieutenant"* came, was it not a presage to victory? Fairfax himself, too, his looks were pale as death yesterday, but now he is all alacrity, "his soldiers see in his cheerful countenance the promise of victory." On the other side, the cavalry is full of assurance, but the infantry is hardly so hopeful. Those marchings and counter-marchings, and constant changing of plans, do not speak well for their commanders' decision and clear-sightedness. A mighty difference; it is the hour of life or death, and they cannot confide in their leaders' firmness

* Milton.

and foresight, on which both depend! But they are brave men and will do bravely. The royalists place bean-stalks in their hats; the others have no directions on the subject; a few of their own accord put up some white paper or linen, the rest carry no mark.

Thus, then, these twenty thousand men stand face to face on that fair summer morning waiting for the word in order to fall upon each other. The broad moor glows with the broom in full flower—its golden glory mingling with the lowlier blossoms of the heath. The wind blows sharply from the north-west, and there is a little preparatory manœuvring to obtain the advantage of it. A few shots are fired from the scanty artillery on either side. And see, a forlorn hope of three hundred musketeers advances towards the royal army; its orders are to advance steadily, to wait in the vale till it is charged, and then fall back as steadily as it advanced. The battle is begun. Rupert with his right approaches the left of his opponents. He charges swiftly, terribly, crying "Queen Mary!" while the answering shout is "God is our strength!" Brave is the meeting, Ireton is not made to yield, bravely is that fierce charge encountered, but it is irresistible. Ireton is borne down, his horse is killed, himself thrust through the thigh with a halberd, and wounded in the face; his eyes become dim, he is carried off a prisoner, and his troops fly swiftly, while Rupert's as swiftly pursue them. How fares it on the other wing? Has the Invincible given way? Not he. Langdale charged him, but he yielded not a step. His Ironsides charge in turn—"like a torrent driving all before them." Down they rush into that narrow valley conquerors

and conquered, but his clear eye sees when to stay the pursuit. He drives them fairly from the field, far enough to prevent them rallying, then he as quickly returns to it. Work is yet to do there, and he well knew his work is undone while anything remains to do,—scattered troops may rally, but the danger is from those who stand. With those in the centre there has been hot work. Ashley comes on with ready energy—there is one discharge on each side, and then closing they meet hand to hand, fighting with the butt-ends of their muskets. For a brief space this continues, then all of the Roundheads, but Fairfax's own regiment, give way. But they rally. The general, bareheaded (for he lost his helmet in the first charge), with a "spirit heightened above the ordinary spirit of man," thinks not for a moment of retreat.* He is "to and again in the front, carrying orders, bringing on divisions in thickest dangers, and with gallant bravery."* Skippon, too, is busy, he brings on a troop that is not quite disorganised, but in doing it is shot in the side, "yet leads them on." Nor will he quit the field though Fairfax desires him. "No, general, I will not stir," replies the brave old man; "I will not stir while a man will stand."† But the disorder is too great to be remedied. Then the commanders with their colours, and such of the soldiers as are firm, fall into the reserves, order is re-established, and these fresh troops advancing, quickly compel the wearied royalists to fly. Not all! there stands one regiment "like a rock."‡ Again and again Fairfax charges, but they stand rock-like still, though their

* Bishop's Letter. † Fairfax's Letter.
‡ Rushworth.

comrades have all deserted them, and though the king, for whom they are dying, stands with his untouched reserves idly on the hill there. What heed they! They know their duty and will do it. Grievous is it to see brave men thus stand *hopeless*. Fairfax despatches Skippon with his regiment to the other side, and so with sharp shots, with heavy blows they beat their way through that rock and meet in the middle. It is battered down, crushed. But why stand those reserves idly there? Will decision never reach their counsels? The king will charge—is ready to do so—plainly must do so—is not the foot everywhere breaking? He places himself at the head of his guards, but the Earl of Carnewarth, who rides next him, "lays his hand on the bridle of the king's horse, and with two or three full-mouthed Scottish oaths cries, 'Will you go upon your death in an instant?' and before the king understands what he will have, turns his horse round."* Straight flies the word—"the king runs, every one shift for himself,"—and without a blow—without advancing towards the field—all of that reserve fly as though the Invincible were indeed upon them.

But where tarries Rupert all this while? Alas! he is a gallant soldier, but not a wise one. He drove far the troops who fled before him—too far, but he returned at last? The foolish boy! he comes upon the train of his adversaries on his return, and must needs stay to take it. He wants trophies—his men want booty, and so they fall on there, while their fellows are being hewed to pieces in the field—clean forgotten! But the train is well guarded,—Cromwell is not a careless soldier,—

* Clarendon.

and Rupert cannot make an impression upon it. Again he tries, but it is in vain. Again? No—"to the field." It is too late; all is lost there, and he has some difficulty in rejoining the king, who has rallied his reserves about half a mile beyond his old station. Meanwhile Cromwell had returned and completed the work of destruction in the field; then calling off their men, the generals put them again in order, and they advance ready for battle as at first.

Not so with the king's men. "One charge more and we regain the day," pleads he, and pleads in vain. Rupert's men declare they have acted their parts—the battle is over, they will not begin the day again. They have no "Cause" to fight for. "That difference was observed shortly from the beginning of the war," as Clarendon tells us, "in the discipline of the king's troops, and of those which marched under the command of Cromwell, that though the king's troops prevailed in the charge, and routed those they charged, they never rallied themselves again in order, nor could be brought to make a second charge again the same day; whereas Cromwell's troops, if they prevailed, or though they were beaten and routed, presently rallied again and stood in good order till they received new orders." In vain therefore was it to entreat them to stand when they saw those men before them closing steadily upon them. They retreat slowly at first, but ever quickening till retreat becomes a chase for life or death. It was "extreme hot work," as one who was in it said, and hot was the chase afterwards. "We pursued them," said Cromwell in his letter written directly after, "from three miles short of Harborough to nine beyond,

even to sight of Leicester, whither the king fled." And now, when a peaceful peasant is digging a trench from some of the meadows, or by the road side, it often happens that his spade strikes upon the bones of one of those poor stragglers. From Naseby to Leicester—a weary sixteen miles for those miserable men. What was it to them that the fields were fair, that the trees were bending beneath their graceful foliage, that the gentle sun was sliding softly and in beauty towards the west—they dared not even stoop to drink from the brook murmuring so gently by the way-side, heedless of all that bloody work. Frightful was the encounter, more terrible the flight.

Clarendon says that among those slain in the pursuit "were above a hundred women, some whereof were the wives of officers of quality." Shocking as this is, it appears to be true that a great many women were killed or wounded. In the letters of the other party they are spoken of, though by a less polite name. One says there were "above fifteen hundred of that tribe with the royal army; five hundred at the least being taken. . . . Many of them were Irish women of cruel countenances. Some of them were cut in their faces by our soldiers when taken." Monstrous work that; one hardly knows whether it was done out of fanaticism or revenge. Perhaps the last, and it is the only excuse that could be made for such unmanly conduct. The Puritans were full of horror at the terrible events of the Irish "O'Neile Insurrection," and many of those who had been engaged in it were known to be in the king's army; and they remembered, too, that in some very recent engagements in England it was said these very Irish

women "with long knives had done much mischief;" not only using their knives in the fight, but afterwards when they went over the ground to strip the corpses.

This victory virtually put an end to the contest. On the king's side the loss was irreparable. Many of his best officers were slain or taken: of his men above five thousand were killed or in the hands of his enemies. All his artillery and baggage was lost. All his private papers even were lost. Himself alone escaped.

It is instructive to read the letter Cromwell wrote immediately he returned from the pursuit. The rugged energy of the man breathes through every sentence. Cromwell's manner of speaking and writing has been found fault with, and it is not certainly fashioned after the rules of modern sentence-weavers; but, better than any fine writing, it lets you see the man. Observe this in the conclusion of it:—"Sir, this is none other but the hand of God, and to him alone belongs the glory, wherein none are to share with him. The general served you with all faithfulness and honour, and the best commendations I can give to him is, that I dare say he attributes all to God, and would rather perish than assume to himself—which is an honest and a thriving way,—and yet as much for bravery may be given to him in this action, as to a man. Honest men served you faithfully in this action. Sir, they are trusty; I beseech you, in the name of God, not to discourage them. I wish this action may beget thankfulness and humility in all that are concerned in it. He that ventures his life for the liberty of his country, I wish he trust God for the liberty of his conscience, and you for the liberty he

fights for." Some call all this cant, and the man a hypocrite. It may be so; if this *be* cant, the man who could sit down at such a moment and write it must have been the most consummate of hypocrites. We have spoken as though the victory were chiefly to be ascribed to the superior genius of Cromwell; that appears to have been the general impression. While praise is awarded to all the three generals, Cromwell, though but second in command, is the most prominent.

The site of the battle is, as we have said, easily traceable, especially if the plan in Rushworth, or the copy of it in Mastin, be consulted first. It is easy to find a guide at Naseby, who will impart all the information that is current there; but very little reliance can be placed on that, as it is evidently obtained at second-hand from books, or rather from strangers who have visited the place. When Mastin wrote his 'History,' though he had been a resident for several years in the village, he could not find that there was the smallest genuine traditional knowledge of the fight among the peasantry, except that all the inhabitants turned out to bury the corpses. Nor could I learn, though I talked with many of the peasantry on the subject, that they had ever heard any of their fathers relate any of the particulars. "No, I never heard the ould people talk anything about it," was the only answer. The field itself, however, still retains evidence of the event. The bodies were collected and buried in several huge pits that were hastily dug; and the earth with which they were covered has sunk considerably, so that now they form large hollows—some of the deeper, from the water collect-

ing in them, except in very dry weather, form ponds, and being left waste round the borders, have become fringed with brambles and weeds. The plough is not carried over any of the graves, and they have a solemn effect when it is known what they are. In cultivating the soil, bullets, cannon-balls, and fragments of arms are frequently turned up. The man I had with me when examining the place had been a servant of Mr. Mastin's, and had dug for him in several of the pits. The bodies, he said, were not more than eighteen inches or two feet from the surface. The arms are usually rusted to pieces, but not always; my man had dug up a "swoard not very long ago, and polished her up as broight as bran-new."

Not far from the field there is a pyramid erected by the present lord of the manor in commemoration of the battle, with an inscription, bidding kings to take warning from it not to encroach on the liberties of their subjects, and subjects not to resist their sovereigns—"a very good inscription, 't is too," said a man at the inn of whom I was making some inquiries about the place; "a very good inscription —I got half-a-crown for copying it for a gentleman in Warwickshire;" it is rather too direct a plagiarism, though, from Dogberry's charge to the watch, while it has omitted the conclusion—"what if he will not?" *

* I have not thought it necessary in a work of this kind to make any particular references to any authorities for the several assertions in the text. In writing the account of the battle I have consulted the contemporary authorities, of which there are a large number. Rushworth, Whitelock, and Clarendon have been my guides; but I have examined all

other contemporary writers, who had means of knowing, with which I was acquainted. In the British Museum is a large collection of pamphlets published during the Commonwealth and the struggle that preceded its establishment: such of these as referred to the battle I have made use of; many of the phrases placed within inverted commas are borrowed from them, and all so marked are taken from contemporary descriptions, mostly of such as profess to have been eye-witnesses of the fight; but though I have borrowed phrases from them, I have not trusted to them for anything beyond slight details, except when they agree with the others I have named. The account is as strictly accurate as I could make it.

CHAPTER III.

THE FOOT-PATH WAY.

For a few miles farther there is nothing of interest along our river; nor can much be said for the beauty of the way. The scenery of this part of Northamptonshire is rather monotonous; consisting chiefly of broad undulations of pasture-lands, strictly enclosed, well stored with fat cattle, and plentifully sprinkled with flourishing farm-yards; raising fair visions of comfort and abundance, and thoroughly English in character; but rather wearisome to a stranger. So that the visitor would probably use a pedestrian's liberty and wander a while from the direct course of the stream, especially as there is no foot-path by it. But we must not do so. After it leaves the battle-field it is what old Leland calls "a praty broke;" but so small that it would not attract attention. It runs along wide fields, somewhile hidden by the tangled bramble-bushes, and presently careering in broad daylight. It will lead us, if we follow it, through many a little quiet, thoroughly secluded, nook, past homely cottages, with their picturesque tenantry; by solitary farm-houses, reminding us, by their plain substantial working-day air, of olden times; and among a people fresher and less sophisticated than by our great roads. Not that anywhere in these parts is there anything approaching

a wild country; there are quiet little groups of houses, cheerful neat clay-cottages, but tame all as the cattle that wander about the closes. There are many shady green lanes too, that our river will lead us along, with hedge-row elms and polled oaks in profusion; and altogether there will be found an agreeable variety of calm scenes, but the solitary will sigh for the mountains. Still it is always the safest course to make the best of what is about us, and there will not need much effort to enjoy this part of our journey.

Just beyond the limits of Naseby we reach a farm-house called Sulby-Abbey, from its standing on the site of a convent of the Premonstratensian order, founded about 1155, by William de Wydeville (or Wyvile), Lord of Welford, in honour of the Blessed Virgin. It received large additional bequests and endowments in succeeding years; and at the dissolution of monasteries its whole income was, according to the survey, 305*l.* 8*s.* 5*d.*, or, after all deductions of charges on lands, &c., "with divers pensions and stipends, and charitable distributions to the poor on Maunday-Thursday, and the anniversaries of benefactors," 258*l.* 8*s.* 5*d.*; from which the benevolent Henry allowed Ralph Armonte, the last abbot, a yearly pension of one pound for life.* There are a few scattered fragments of the stones, some carved heads and the like, worked up in the farm-buildings, but no remains of the old abbey exist, as a geologist would say, *in situ.*

Welford, the first village we arrive at, is a place of considerable antiquity, being mentioned under

* Bridges, 'Northampton.' Tanner.

the name of Wellesford in Domesday. It has little to call for notice, however; the church does not differ from neighbouring ones in any important particular, and the only other building of any size is the Talbot Inn, which was formerly the manor-house, and has a rather more imposing look than most of its kind. Now it is dull enough, as the posting trade, which used to be rather large, is almost destroyed by the common enemy of post-masters—the railway. Our river, widening as it runs, next passes by the Kelworths, north and south, along pretty little bits of country scenery, such as a sketcher might perhaps be tempted to insert, a few at least, in his sketch-book. When it reaches Stamford Park it is made to expand into a fine piece of ornamental water. Stamford Hall, a large but not very handsome mansion, is the seat of the Cave family, by whom the manor of Stamford was purchased, when Sulby-Abbey, to which it was attached, was dissolved; a time, as Fuller says, "when many good bargains, or rather cheap pennyworths, were bought of abbey lands." The park is picturesque, and the neighbourhood still more so; the parish, a little neat quiet place, is in Northamptonshire, the mansion being in Leicestershire, between which counties our stream is for a few miles the boundary. The venerable church is worth a visit; in it are a great many monuments to various members of the Cave family; and some old stained glass adorns its windows.

From Stamford to Lilburne the river increases in beauty and importance, and the district loses nothing of its quiet secluded character. At Lilburne the river flows through a valley of much interest, the hills about being, too, of more broken

forms than any we have yet past, render it more beautiful. Here are some elaborate earth-works, close by the river-side, and just by the church; there is also a hill at a short distance from the town, that is partly, if not entirely, artificial. These are believed to be Roman, and Bridges has described them pretty fully in his 'History of Northamptonshire.' The Roman station Tripontium is placed by the best authorities at Lilburne; though by some it is considered to have been at Dowbridge. On the banks of the Avon there was anciently, according to Bridges, a castle; but of this there is no evidence, and it probably arose from some confused tradition of the inhabitants; and "the castle" is generally the name assigned to any hill or earth-work by the country people. That such a tradition is still retained here I had proof. For, asking a man the way to Lilburne, he said—"Ah, that was a great place once; three kings had their home in it!—so at least ould history tells us. You can see where their castle stood; it is called Castle-hill now."

These Roman works, it is thought, were the nucleus of the present town. The fort covered about the fifth part of an acre. Many articles of Roman workmanship have been discovered here, and beyond the limits of the present town. Human bones have also been found in rather large numbers "between the castle and round-hill, and there is a tradition that a battle has been fought here." But no reliance whatever can be placed on these traditions by themselves, and there appears to be no external support for them.

Catthorpe, a little beyond Lilburne, was for a while the residence of the poet Dyer. He had

been originally, as he says himself, "an itinerant painter in his native country (South Wales), and in Herefordshire, Worcestershire, &c.," but without much success. He received instructions in his art from Richardson, the author of several works on painting that are still read; and afterwards, for further instruction, visited Rome, where he employed himself in sketching the classic remains and scenery of the city and neighbourhood: an employment which suggested to him his best poem, 'The Ruins of Rome.' By this time he had become convinced that he could not attain eminence in his profession; and, though he sketched a great deal, he is believed not to have produced many pictures; and being of a serious turn of mind, and strongly attached to a country life, he was induced to enter the church. After due probation he was ordained, and presented to the living of Catthorpe. He had also by this time married:—"My wife's name was Ensor, whose grandmother was a Shakspere, descended from a brother of everybody's Shakspere." He was a man of a kindly unambitious temper, strongly attached to a country life, and his poetry has all the sweetness and simplicity of his character. His 'Grongar-Hill,' having found its way into all the collections, is the most read, and has been generally the most admired of his poems. But there is more power and more of poetic feeling displayed in his 'Ruins of Rome,' which deserves a far higher reputation than it has obtained. Johnson—and it is always pleasant to read his judicial censures, even when we least agree with them—says, in comparing it with 'Grongar-Hill,' "the idea of the 'Ruins of Rome' strikes more, but pleases less; and the title raises greater

expectations than the performance gratifies." But this is hardly true, and if Dyer had entirely thrown off the conventional shackles, that all then gloried in wearing, and which he was blamed for wearing loosely, he would have secured a permanent place among the best of our lesser poets. He was not deficient in imagination, if his imagination was not of a high order; and he had a painter's eye for the harmonies of Nature, and a painter's feeling for the glory of her colouring. He was versatile, and his mind wanted the chastening of intense concentration of purpose; but as the poetry of an agreeable and amiable, though somewhat indolent observer of Nature, he is far better worth reading than many a one of higher name among his contemporaries or immediate predecessors—and he will outlive many a noisier junior. This opinion is rather heretical, but I take shelter under Wordsworth's wing, and he is at least as good a judge as most of those who find Dyer to be only wearisome and mediocre.

He was presented to the living of Catthorpe in 1741 (the income being 80*l.*), and remained there about ten years. His rectory-house is on a hillside, looking over the vale of the Avon, which is here very beautiful, and all about is just the placid scenery that such a poet might delight to wander among. In his 'Country Walk' he has described its unobtrusive beauties, a few lines from which will serve to depict and give a specimen of his manner,—certainly his least beautiful manner,—and also help us to fancy the poetic parson's unbendings:—

> "I am resolved this charming day
> In the open fields to stray;

And have no roof above my head
But that whereon the gods do tread.
. . . . . I go
Where thousand flaming flowers grow;
And every neighbouring hedge I greet
With honeysuckle smelling sweet;
Now o'er the daisied meads I stray
And meet with, as I pace my way,
Sweetly shining on my eye
A rivulet gliding smoothly by."

And we can very well imagine how amid such walks he would love to stroll, and, like another clerical poet, "holy Mr. Herbert," "*relish* versing." Here, away from the world, he employed his leisure in the preparation of his longest poem—'The Fleece.' The subject was no doubt suggested by the opportunities his residence here afforded him of becoming acquainted with the various stages of the manufacture of wool, from its being shorn from the sheep's back to its conversion into different articles of clothing. Accordingly he has drawn largely on the scenery of these parts, and many portions of the poem are pleasing, though, as a whole, dull enough. The whir of the stocking-loom is still to be heard at many of the cottages,—it is the only sound, indeed, that disturbs the silence of the street.

Descending from Catthorpe we come upon the "Tripontian fields

"Where ever-gliding Avon's limpid wave
Thwarts the long course of dusty Watling Street,"

as Dyer sings in his 'Fleece.' This is known as Dove or Dow bridge, and here the Romans, as some fancy, had a *pons*, if not three, and hence the name Tripontium. The present bridge is not very

old; and the road, though running along Watling Street, is also modern. But the ancient Watling Street is still traceable in part, for that great people made their roads as if they were to be as durable as they believed their empire would be. Of the four great Roman ways, we shall cross three in our journey by the Avon—Watling Street, where we now are, Ickneld Street, and the Fosse-way.

Here we will quit our river, and proceed up Watling Street, and across some fields to Lutterworth, which stands on a hill beside the Swift, a tributary of our river. These is nothing to call for notice on our way to Lutterworth, some three miles; and therefore we will strike across the fields the nearest way, taking the opportunity of having a little general gossip till we reach it. These fields will in themselves afford little more that is interesting or striking than any we have passed over. There are a few broad prospects, and some tracts of country that are pleasing in character, but on the whole the traveller will have considerable calls on his patience. And this he must learn to endure if he wishes to enjoy country scenery, and country life, wherever he bends his steps. A pedestrian, especially if he rambles alone, as every pedestrian must or ought to do sometimes, should

> "In solitary places be
> Unto himself good company."

If he does thus learn to depend on himself for society, he will soon care little for the want of any other; but, to parody a saying of Montaigne's,—you must for yourself, to be company to yourself, prepare yourself to entertain yourself. And this is best done by learning to draw all the enjoyment

that is possible out of present scenes and circumstances. It is surprising how much pleasure and instruction too the most commonplace neighbourhood will yield to those who know how to draw instruction from it. To the eye of a painter the dullest spot will afford some beauty: and where there is human life there need never be wanting matter to interest any one. It only requires a constant openness of heart and understanding to receive pleasure, and it will come. Dr. Burney calls a certain song "of the rogue Autolycus"—nonsensical; yet it contains in fact a truth far deeper than many transcendentalisms. Not however to go beyond our text, we may venture to say that it imparts the best advice that was ever given to a pedestrian within the same limits:

> "Jog on, jog on the foot-path way,
> And merrily hent the stile-a;
> A merry heart goes all the day,
> Your sad heart tires in a mile-a."

This is true wisdom, in spite of the Doctor: and, happily, it is practicable to some extent. Black care, we know, often sits behind the horseman; but the *foot*man is to blame who lets her mount his knapsack. A country ramble should be as free as possible from care—it is a little break in our serious employments, a diversion from the stern business of the world, and all thought of them should be laid aside. To do so is both needful and wholesome. The more thoroughly we use the present hour the more fit shall we be for work when we get back to it, and the more cheerfully shall we return to it. Work indeed is enjoyment after a well spent country holiday.

A cheerful temper will in every way smooth the rambler's path. It should be his object in passing through a district to become as thoroughly acquainted with it as time will permit. The scenery, the antiquities, or the natural history, should not alone occupy our thoughts. The inhabitants are at least as much deserving of our observation and regard; and they will repay our best attention. The peasantry of the several counties of England have not been fairly compared and understood. It is not easy to know them; to their wealthy neighbours they are reserved and inaccessible in their genuine state; to strangers they are shy; and when they thus stand on their "manners" they are exceedingly unnatural. Perhaps no one has a better chance of seeing them as they are than a pedestrian, who will meet them frankly and cheerfully. He falls in with them on the road; he often finds an excuse for looking into their cottages; and he may see as much as he pleases of their social habits by the fire-side of the village inn. Nor should any of these means be neglected, or any other that may occur. The wanderer should beware, if he really wishes to know them, of haughtiness or inquisitiveness. Undue familiarity he need not fear from them, as there is always respect and good feeling enough about the English peasant to prevent that. The secret of gaining the confidence of the countryman, as it is of every one else, is to respect his ways of thoughts and expression; and, if there be candour, that feeling will not be wanting. The surest way to shut out knowledge, as well as happiness, is to let the heart and the lip carry an everlasting sneer. Better by far like too much than

too little. And it ought never to be forgotten that every man, however humble or ignorant he may be, has feelings, affections, sympathies, and these should ever be treated with respect as holy things. He who cannot in his heart respond to the joys and sorrows of a poor man, had better avoid intercourse with him.

The leisurely rambler, and all rambling should be leisurely,—Horace's maxim is as much for the pedestrian as for any one, "*festina lente*,"—the leisurely rambler will often be surprised at the curious information he will gather; the relics of old customs he will catch sight of; the clear thought, and original "mother wit," as well as the marvellous stupidity, and desperate ignorance, of those he encounters; the kindness, self-denial, and various virtues; with, alas, but too many opposing vices. One thing he will not fail to have —an intense and overpowering feeling of the need of some effort being made to enlighten (a word but too applicable, morally and mentally) our peasantry and to improve their condition. And he will inquire, in bitterness of heart, why those who alone can with hope of success adventure on the task let the paltry jealousies and the unholy strifes of party prevent them from earnest, anxious, and steady co-operation for so pure an object.

But I am plunging into most unreasonable depths, and therefore quit the subject, lest you quit me. I only meant, gentle reader, to point out what a large store of information, of pleasure, and of matter for serious thought, lay a little out of sight, perhaps, but to be found for the seeking, even in the dullest route; and how a cheerful

temper and an open heart would "make a sunshine in the shadiest place." And to illustrate this, I thought of saying something about villagers, and village inns, and wakes, and gipsies, and so on, when I slipt almost at starting into that deep water. But you will be spared some weariness by it perhaps.

CHAPTER IV.

THE REFORMER'S GRAVE.

We shall not need to stay very long at Lutterworth. The town has little in itself to call for observation. It is a respectable and apparently flourishing place; not very large, but a neat, comfortable country town. There are some good houses, a mechanics' institute, with its lectures and lecture-rooms, and no doubt its lecturers too. Altogether the place is pleasant to look at, and apparently pleasant to live in. But the chief object of interest is of course the church. It stands behind and above the town, and is a prominent object for a great distance: it is of the early pointed style of the thirteenth century, of some architectural merit and interest, and of large size. At different times, however, it has undergone repairs and alterations which have not added to its purity of style, and in a storm which occurred some years back its spire was blown down, and has not been replaced, so that it is considerably altered externally from its original appearance, and not less so internally. Yet all that is as nothing, for it is still the church in which Wiclif for the last years of his life preached and taught,—from this place proceeded those thoughts that took root in other minds, and sprung up and spread ever higher and wider, till they ripened into the great event of 1517; and what that has led to we all know.

Wiclif has been judged very differently as men have come prepared to read his character; and now

Lutterworth Church.

perhaps it is the fashion to speak of him with less admiration than at almost any previous period. So be it; fashions change, and men change with them, but no fashion can change truth into a lie. Rightly to estimate Wiclif is not easy perhaps, yet neither is it very difficult, and however much learned antiquaries may dwell on the rust of the medal, the true outline is easily traceable. Let us look at what he taught, and then we can estimate his merit. He saw that true spirituality had been driven out of the church by worldliness; that priestly dominion overtopped and supplanted the secular power; that a low standard of moral truth was set up by the substitution of general money-pardons for sinful conduct, instead of pointing to the abundant mercy of God. He learned this from his Bible, and he communicated the truth to others. He could not be silent. Come what might, he must speak out. And where he found guidance himself, he taught others to look for it; and that they might there find it, he gave them the word in their own tongue. This is a plain and direct course, and that he took it speaks aloud for his sincerity. Surely a man thoughtful only of himself might have found a more speedy mode and a likelier to advance himself. Then there was a multitude of saints held up as listening to the suppliant; against all this he was the first Protestant. As it appears he saw, as Luther after him saw also, that semblance had usurped the place of reality—idolatry of true worship—and against it he declared an internecine war. He proclaimed what he believed was the ancient gospel-truth of individual responsibility, and he appealed from the traditions and the scriptures of the fathers to the scriptures of the primitive disciples—the Word of

God, as alone of authority. This was not a light thing to do. To deny the infallibility of the Pontiff, nay, more, to denounce him as indeed most erring, Anti-Christ himself, was surely putting all at once to the test. I think there was no half-heartedness here. This surely was bearding the lion. That he should have been, as has been said, insincere, dishonest, is hard to believe. A self-seeker! Fair prospects of success, as men of this world would judge, had opened before him, if he would have pursued the beaten path.

But the bitterness of his language has been bitterly declaimed against. Placid literary gentlemen, sitting at their ease by the quiet fire-sides of their well-carpeted studies, find his harshness of speech unbearable and indefensible. And indeed it were to be wished that he had spoken of the evil he saw about him and of his adversaries with the meekness of a modern controversialist: but some allowance must be made for the difference of the times; and in truth it must be confessed he was a lion at his gentlest, little likely to "roar you an 't were any nightingale." With him his task was an earnest one,—not a struggle for life or death merely,—he had a testimony to deliver, and woe to him if he did not deliver it. He looked on it as a quarrel of more than personal or even temporal interest, and, to use the mighty words of Milton, wanted not that it should be shivered into small fragments and bickerings. And the truth is, no reformer ever did use only mild phraseology; as Luther said of himself in like circumstances, "a man fighting with the devil and his myrmidons, cannot always give soft words." It does seem to me, after reading many books about it, and weighing the matter as well as I am able, that he was in

very deed a man of a true and honest heart—a fervent, holy man; and that it was from an earnest depth of character and profound reverence for truth, and not from a cautious "feeling of his way," as has been said, that the progressive development of his views arose. He proclaimed only what he was assured of; but as he saw farther, and felt convinced that, by solemn inquiry and sober reflection, he *now* did know more, so he withheld no longer his testimony. How could he? He may have gone too far, he may have been mistaken in some things; but that he sought after the truth, and that he found it, is to me certain.

That he sought the protection of the mighty of the land is true, and yet not marvellous; and whether right or wrong, is exactly what Luther did after him, and what any wise man would have done in his circumstances, if such protection were to be had. That he shrunk from danger is not true, any more than it would be to say that he ran into it. An enthusiast might do the one, a hypocrite or coward the other: he was neither, and so he neither courted danger nor by falsehood sought to avert it. By some he has been charged with appealing to the people; others have found little more than scholastic subtleties in his writings. One thing is clear, whatever the form, there appeared to be no indecision or indefiniteness in his main views to his contemporaries. On some points it was like enough he was subtle and obscure too. Dr. Lingard, in summing up his character, which he does with the extraordinary fairness that is characteristic of him in all ecclesiastical matters, says, that in regard to the Eucharist "he taught a doctrine similar to the impanation of Luther;" and that when called upon to defend his

views thereon, " he intrenched himself behind so many unintelligible distinctions, that it will be difficult for the most acute logician to discover his meaning." Which is quite probable. It would indeed rather surprise one ever so little read in the theology of the period before Wiclif, to discover any one who did not admit the generally received opinion of the church clear the subject from the entanglement of these scholastic subtleties. A century and a half later it was the rock upon which Luther and his disciples had nearly made shipwreck of their common cause. That he had faults is beyond question, but, as it has been finely said by Southey,* " considering the intrepidity and ardour of his mind, it is surprising that his errors were not more and greater. A great and admirable man he was; his fame, high as it is, is not above his deserts; and it suffers no abatement upon comparison with the most illustrious of those who have followed in the path which he opened."

Besides his own teaching, he insured the propagation of his views by calling in the aid of a number of assistants, his " poor priests " as he called them, and also by the translation of the Old and New Testaments; and these means, no doubt, did more to diffuse his opinions than his own preaching. His New Testament, according to Professor Blunt† (a sufficient authority in such a matter), " might at this day be read in our churches without the necessity of many, even verbal alterations, and on comparing it with the authorised version of King James, it will be found that the latter was hammered on Wiclif's anvil." ‡

* Book of the Church.

† Sketch of the Reformation, p. 87.

‡ In the excellent ' Sketches of the History of Literature

We may say, indeed, that Wiclif did more than any for several centuries before him to break the fetters from the soul of man; to produce and perfect that spiritual freedom, possessing which alone the human intellect can walk erect. The mighty truth he again proclaimed, that erring man must strive to render to his Maker a reasonable service, and that his Divine Master will stoop to aid him therein, if he in faith and humility seek his aid. Obscured as religion had then become with the thick piles of saintly intercession, penances and money-worship, such an unfolding of the divinity must, one would think, have come to a thoughtful mind as a most sublime revelation, and if to us a still clearer vision has been opened, let us not withhold honour from him who amid the thick darkness sought after and found a way to the heavenly throne, and pointed it out to others that they too might walk therein. Were I ever so to differ from his opinions, did I hate them even, I think I should still reverence the man.

in England,' vol. ii., specimens are given of Wiclif's translation of the Bible; but it will be seen that Mr. Craik holds a less high opinion of the value of his English style than that above expressed, calling it "rude and difficult." But if it be read without regard to the uncouth spelling, and with the somewhat full-mouthed pronunciation of the northern and midland counties, it will be found quite as plain to the ear as the dialect in the present day of either Yorkshire or Leicestershire, where Wiclif was born, and where he lived—of course keeping in mind the peculiar use of the letter (printed) ȝ, which, to borrow Dr. Todd's illustration from his preface to Wiclif's 'Apology,' printed for the Camden Society, is sometimes to be represented by the soft or quiescent *gh*, as in tauȝt, *taught;* sometimes by *g* hard, as in aȝen, *agen;* sometimes by *h*, as ȝerd, *herd;* by *y* as ȝong, *young;* and sometimes altogether dropped, as in ȝerth, *earth.*

Like the great accomplisher of the Reformation, which he only commenced, he died in peace. While in the discharge of his ministerial duties he was stricken, and hardly could be conveyed to a chair in his vestry, where his spirit ascended where all is true and clear and blissful. They buried his corpse in the church, and there for some forty years it slept in its quiet bed. But when at Constance that council sat which has crowned itself with eternal infamy by its treacherous murder of Huss and of Jerome, it was ordained that it should rest there no longer. Wiclif's doctrines were condemned, and his body ordered to be exhumed and burnt, "if it could be discerned from those of the faithful." Fuller shall tell the rest:—"In obedience thereunto, Richard Fleming, bishop of Lincoln, diocesan of Lutterworth, sent his officers (vultures with a quick sight sent at a dead carcase!) to ungrave him accordingly. To Lutterworth they come, sumner, commissary, official, chancellor, proctors, doctors, and the servants (so that the remnant of the body would not hold out a bone amongst so many hands), take what is left out of the grave, and burn them to ashes, and cast them into Swift, a neighbouring brook running hard by. Thus this brook hath conveyed his ashes into Avon, Avon into Severn, Severn into the narrow seas, they into the main ocean. And thus the ashes of Wiclif are the emblem of his doctrine, which now is dispersed all the world over." * "I know not," says Fuller, in another place, "whether the vulgar tradition be worth remembrance, that the brook into

* Wordsworth has embodied the conclusion of this passage in one of his 'Ecclesiastical Sonnets,' a proof, if any were wanting, of the *poetical* richness of Fuller, hidden as it often is by its quaint drapery.

which Wiclif's ashes were poured, never since overflowed the banks." It is worth remembering for one thing at least, as a proof of the estimation in which he was held by the people; and perhaps, also, it would be worth thinking over by those who may be disposed to copy the tactics of this Council of Constance.

The pulpit from which he preached still stands in the church. It is of oak rather richly carved, but the carving is almost filled up with thick coats of varnish. Only the body of the pulpit is ancient; the other parts are carved in a kind of resemblance of it, but they are much inferior. A plain old oak chair is also shown as that in which he is said to have died. It stands in the vestry, where is also his table; and on the wall hangs an old velvet robe by time and the worms brought to decay, and not by them alone, for it is enclosed in a glass case to preserve it from human visitors, who generally carried off a fragment. His portrait, too, is there—a grave, venerable head, expressive of much, but wanting the fire that must have been in his eye. Whether it is at all authentic I know not. A few years back the people of Lutterworth erected a memorial to their great rector. It is a basso-rilievo representing him preaching from the altar, and is a work of much merit. The sculptor of it is Mr. Westmacott, jun., and, like all his works, it exhibits the marks of genius, knowledge, and careful thought. The church itself is a large one, but it is much to be regretted that the interior has been at various times altered in such a manner as quite to have changed its character. The only thing that ever appears to have been thought of was to make as many sittings as possible, a matter of course most desirable—particularly if the town was not sufficiently large

for another church—but some regard should have been shown to the preservation of the ancient appearance of such a church. The present tall pews are comparatively recent: there are a few of the first pews in the side aisles which have some carving about them; on one of these I noticed the date 1637.

There are a good many pleasant rambles around Lutterworth to repay those who have time to seek for them; but we have been long enough from our Avon, and must prepare to return to it. We may rejoin it by following the little brook of which mention has been made, or by some shorter cut across the fields. The Swift is rather pretty for the remainder of its course; it is said to owe its name to the rapidity of its current, but it is not rapid as a mountain-stream is rapid. Most of the rivers, however, in these parts are sluggish, as the Avon is for example, and consequently when one is somewhat swifter than ordinary it is made much of; thus, for a similar reason, another tributary of the Avon, which we shall come to hereafter, is called the Arrow. From the meadows through which the Swift runs Lutterworth has a more picturesque appearance than elsewhere. The town straggles up the side of an irregular hill, whose summit is crowned by the old church, and the lively brook careers briskly round its base. There are no buildings remarkable either for their proportions or for their age, but their situation makes some amends, and the modern improvements of the church are here fortunately not discernible, while the brook itself give a graceful finish to the picture, being fringed with alders and its banks mottled with gay flowers.

CHAPTER V.

RUGBY.

From Dow-bridge, where we left the Avon, to Brownsover, where the Swift falls into it, some four or five miles, it has passed no place of any consequence, nor is there anything in the scenery to call for remark. Clifton and Newton, one on either side of it, are indeed the only villages that occur. Samuel Carte, the antiquary, was vicar of Clifton; and there his more celebrated son, Thomas Carte, the historian, was born. A little beyond Brownsover, at a short distance from the river on the left, lies Rugby; a town of some importance since the formation of the Birmingham Railway, but of more interest from its well-known Grammar-school. Of interest the town itself has none—except to graziers and sportsmen, who find a good deal in its cattle-fairs and its hunting "meets." Rugby school was founded in the reign of Elizabeth, by a native either of Rugby or of Brownsover, on the other side of the Avon, Lawrance Sheriff. He was a citizen of London, some say a shopkeeper, but whether a grocer or a haberdasher is not agreed; he endowed his school liberally with lands, some of which, being in London, have increased in value at least equally with the increase in the value of money. The school buildings, which are rather extensive, were erected

in 1809, from a design by Mr. Hakewell, and are a handsome example of the Elizabethan style. The number of boys is of course various, depending much on the standing of the school, the celebrity of the master, and the like; but is generally above three hundred. When Dr. Arnold was at the head of it the number was much higher; and it is, I believe, much higher now.

Whatever of *general* interest there is in Rugby arises from the connection of Dr. Arnold with it. Rugby, indeed, is especially associated with his name; as his biographer remarks—"With his entrance on his work at Rugby his public life (if it may be so called), no less than his professional life, properly begins:" while here all the writings by which he will be remembered were produced, and here he died. Of the three kinds of history which Bacon enumerates, that of man, he says, "is of most profit and use." And if the profit and use of biography be that we may learn from the example of others how best to fulfil our part, then there are few lives better worth our study than that of Dr. Arnold. Not of course because we shall there find circumstances similar to our own that may serve as rules to direct us; but because we may there see how the whole man may be moulded into completeness and nobleness of character; how to attain that self-discipline which will enable us to make our position and our pursuits in life, not hindrances, but helps; to impart dignity to our calling, whatever it may be, rather than to seek honour from it.

It is refreshing as well as instructive to study such a character as that of Arnold—so sober, so true, so earnest. He was, as is well known, a man

of large attainments, of great powers of mind; and yet considerate, kind and gentle as a child. Firmly attached to his own views on all important subjects, because he had carefully considered his opinions and formed them deliberately, he could still sympathize with those who most differed from him; and even when he thought their sentiments pernicious, he was careful to separate the sentiments themselves from the individuals who propagated them, so long as he saw reason to believe that they were held in honesty of heart. A catholic, tolerant, and liberal spirit characterized his whole conduct, and is impressed on all his writings; and that arising not, as is often the case, from indifference, but the result of the very intensity with which he clung to his own deliberately formed opinions. It is not often that a character of such completeness and compact unity is to be met with; such breadth of view, such clearness of vision; such energy, and such steadiness of purpose; and along with all, and as a cement to the whole, such loftiness and moral beauty.

It must have been no common privilege to have been educated by such a man; and his pupils owe it to their master's memory to show that they have estimated it aright—as, indeed, some have shown already. His notions of education were of the highest order—were worthy of himself. He sought to prepare the whole man for a life of honourable exertion; for usefulness as well as skilfulness; to create, as he told his pupils, "a spirit of manly, and much more of Christian thoughtfulness," as opposed to the besetting sin of our day, a sneering and frivolous spirit: and hence he ever besought them earnestly to cultivate all the powers of their

minds, as intrusted to them for a high and noble purpose. Very instructive is it to read his short sermons to his pupils—to see the entireness with which he had given his mind to his work, and the deep and affectionate interest with which he regarded his pupils; facts which his letters show equally, though often differently, as speaking of them, rather than to them.

His teaching was for their manhood, as well as for their youth. He taught them steadily and thoughtfully to adjust their conduct to the circumstances in which they might at any time be placed, and not to fancy that either intellectually or morally their hope was in the future. Neither in youth nor middle age will it do, he told them, to indulge such a hope: "On the contrary, our hope must lie, not in escape, but in victory. If our temptations press us hard, we cannot expect to have them exchanged for others less powerful; they will remain with us, and we must overcome them or perish. Have we tastes not fully reconciled to our calling—faculties which seem not to have found their proper field? We must seek our remedy, not from without, humanly speaking, but from within: we must discipline ourselves; we must teach our tastes to cling gracefully around that duty to which else they must be helplessly fastened. If any faculties appear not to have found their proper field, we must think that God has, for certain wise reasons, judged it best for us that they should not be exercised; and we must be content to render him the service of others. . . . Fortune will not suit herself to our wishes: we must learn to suit our wishes to her." Lessons of wisdom we are none of us too old to learn. His

own life realized all that he set before his scholars. He was, as he told them they should be, ever learning—ever seeking to become wiser and better, as well as more erudite; and hence there was ever increasing beauty and nobleness in his character, with ever-increasing knowledge, till his premature death. His course was indeed

> "like a star
> Unhasting, unresting."

Rugby should be visited for his sake, and the chapel where he preached and where lie his remains: where, too, is a monument to him erected by his friends and admirers; whose estimation of him is shown by the fact that the subscription was large enough not only to erect such a memorial, but to establish two scholarships in his own favourite study of history, in his own favourite university, Oxford.

About a mile and a half from Rugby, on the Warwick road, is Bilton Hall, somewhile the residence of Addison, who purchased the manor of Bilton for 10,000*l.*, in prospect of his unlucky marriage with the Countess of Warwick. The house retains much of the appearance it possessed in Addison's time; but as it lies more away from the river than Rugby, it is hardly worth wandering so far to look at; especially when "the unsurpassable dulness of the scenery" on that side of Rugby is remembered—"no hills, no plains, not a single wood, and but one single copse; no heath, no down, no rock, no river, no clear stream,—scarcely any flowers, for the lias is particularly poor in them—nothing but one endless monotony of enclosed fields and hedge-row trees." These are Dr. Arnold's

words, and every syllable of them is within the bounds of dullest truth. But although we will get away as soon as we can to our river, it may be proper to let another say his say about this place; and, moreover, the passage is worth quoting as a very pretty specimen of topographical bathos. It is from a most heavy 'History of the County of Warwick, by Wm. Smith, F.R.S.A.' As has been said, the house, with its grounds, remains nearly as when Addison inhabited it. "On entering the mansion, a thrill of respect, even to veneration, unavoidably passes through the bosom of the examiner, when he finds that the furniture used by this learned man still remains; and the pictures, partly selected by his judgment, or procured as a tribute to his feelings, ornament the walls, and occupy precisely the same station as when he was wont to pause and admire them: seldom has the residence of a poet had the fortune to be so preserved for the gratification of posterity." The pictures of Addison's selecting, he very graciously adds, "do much credit to the correctness of his taste."

Somewhat below Rugby, on a rising ground on the right bank of the river, stands Newbold-on-Avon: a place that might be described somewhat in Touchstone's manner, and so passed by, as many places we have already visited, and are yet to visit, must be. But in truth this, if one's memory may be trusted, is a strange odd place; one there is no making anything of. There is about its meadows an absolute *plexus* of canals and railways, running under and over each other in a quite unaccountable manner: now beneath the road, now above it; under the church, across the river, in all

directions, and sending out tentacula in a marvellous fashion. On the map they all look simple enough, but in reality are quite incomprehensible. Their entanglement defies disentangling: they are worse than Rosamond's maze: more bewildering than an act of parliament. After trying for half a morning there, and somewhat less on the map at home, I am compelled to give it up as a hopeless task, and confess myself in something like the predicament Christopher Sly must have found himself after his adventures were over, and he had got back to Barton Heath.

Leaving Newbold, then, we hasten over an up-and-down-hilly piece of road (to borrow a country-woman's compound epithet) to Newnham Regis. Here we have at last fairly escaped from the dull monotony of that part of Warwickshire through which our river has hitherto flowed. The valley is wide, and adorned with fine trees; the river glides with a gentle murmur along it; the banks are diversified; the low hills on either side slope gently towards each other; and the long range of Dunsmore Heath gives character to the distance. Newnham Regis, or King's Newnham, for it is called either indifferently, as its name implies, formerly belonged to the Crown. According to Dugdale it is mentioned in some legal proceedings in the reign of Edward I. as the property of that monarch. Dugdale, in his 'History of Warwickshire,' describes the church of Newnham Regis as being without arms or monuments; and Thomas, in his additions to Dugdale, informs us that "the seats are very handsome; on the walls of the church are paintings in fresco of the four Evangelists in full proportion; on the north-side wall of

the chancel the offerings of the wise men; on the south wall the taking down of our Saviour from the cross." Of the church the tower alone remains; and the churchyard is perverted to a farmyard. The body of the church was taken down towards the close of the eighteenth century, having been for some time disused; the owner of the farm, naturally enough, caring more for his purchase-money than for ecclesiastical antiquities. Ireland appears to have seen the church just before its destruction: the "altar was decorated with some good paintings in fresco well preserved," he tells us; but it is not easy to make anything out of his account of them. "They seem to bear the character and style of painting of the time of James I. The designs are from subjects in the New Testament, and in their manner are not unlike those of Rubens, but have more the air of the Italian school. I have preserved a fragment of this work as a specimen." It is a provoking thing that monuments of interest should be thus left to worse than Vandals' hands; and hardly less provoking that Ireland should have so stupidly lost the opportunity of preserving something better than the fragment he boasts that "the love of the arts induced *him* carefully to preserve." The living of King's Newnham had been some time before the desecration of the church united with that of Church Lawford. Close by the river, about a mile before reaching the church, is a medicinal bath, once in high repute. A little volume, descriptive of its virtues, was published in 1587, entitled 'A brief Discourse of certain Baths, or Medicinal Waters, in the county of Warwickshire,' &c. Its author, Walter Bailey, M.D., was a physician of considerable note in his day.

Old Church Tower, Newnham Regis.

He enters pretty fully into details of the diseases for which these waters are remedial; but there, of course, we need not follow him: in the chapter on the proper times for drinking them, there is a passage curious as illustrating the superstitions then prevailing in the world of medicine. He has been recommending summer as the most fit season; but he adds—"I am not ignorant that in consideration of the time to use bath-waters, the learned do dispute whether the same may be ministered in the leap-year, for that authors herein have written diversely, and pronounced contrary opinions, it seemeth to me not necessary by long discourse hereof, to detain the hearer: only this I say, as I do not think but medicinal waters may be used in leap-years, when great occasion urgeth, so for my part I would not rashly counsel any to use them in

the leap-years unless great cause do urge the use of them." Our doctor's prudence is very commendable, and not less so in another matter:—"As for the quantity," he says, "I have known some to have drunken 10 pints in a morning, and some 12, but for my part I can not in any wise either commend or like of these excessive quantities." And "whereas these waters are both actually and potentially cold," these large drinkers of them "have been driven for a long time to use aqua vitæ and hot things to recover their former heat and strength again. Wherefore it is safest to consist in a mediocrity, and never to adventure to drink above 6 or at the uttermost 8 pints." In regard to diet he finds "the usage and manner of our countrymen in England is utterly to be condemned, which while they are using the baths, have no regard to frugality of diet. I admonish them, therefore, to be more spareful in their diet, and so they shall gain health to their bodies, and comfort to their purse." With which judicious prescription we leave him.

Following our stream we soon reach Bretford Bridge, which is in the line of the old Roman Fosseway. What there was of beauty for the next mile or two of the Avon is marred by the straight line of the railway that here continually interferes with it—crossing it twice, and running for some distance in close proximity to it. Wolston, the next place we come to, is a large village, but of a very wretched appearance. The church is large, and has some interesting bits about it; but it is of various periods, and of little beauty as a whole, and the interior is quite unadorned; it contains, however, a few monuments that will perhaps repay examination. There was once an alien priory here—

a cell of St. Peter's supra Dinam in France; but all traces of it have long disappeared, though the name is retained. On its site stands a remarkably fine old brick mansion: it is close by the Avon in a low situation, and is worth visiting. On the other side of the river once stood Brandon Castle; but of it only a few disjointed fragments remain.

As there is no pathway, it is hardly worth while to attempt to follow the windings of the river here. The fields are pleasant, but fairer are before us; and the rambler may conveniently turn aside, and close his day's ramble, by a visit to some of the places a little way from the stream. The long and lofty range of hills on the left that has so agreeably relieved the landscape for the last few miles, is Dunsmore Heath, where the puissant Guy

> "did quell that wondrous cow,
> The passengers that used from Dunsmore to affright."

This heath is a portion of the ridge of lias hills that runs through a good part of Warwickshire; about this neighbourhood the new red-sandstone, with its marls, crops out from beneath it; and both formations will afford the geologist some employment; while the summit of the heath yields some extensive prospects, the tall spires of Coventry being prominent objects on the horizon. But though the hills will be a grateful relief after so long a ramble in the valley, and though there be no cows now to affright the passenger from Dunsmore—those there now being as different from that wondrous one as the present Earl of Warwick is from his redoubted predecessor—yet the stranger will do well to diverge on the other side of the Avon, to Combe Abbey, the seat of Lord Craven—an ancient and most noble monastic edifice, with grounds of fitting

stateliness and extent. It is about two miles from Wolston, and the way is almost a straight line from the bridge—passing Brandon and then up "Twelve o'clock ride" direct to the Abbey grounds. It was from Combe Abbey that Digby, Tresham, and some other of the conspirators in the Gunpowder Plot, designed to carry off James's youthful daughter, the Princess Elizabeth, afterwards Queen of Bohemia, who was here under the care of Lord Harrington, at that time its possessor. Their wild project, it will be remembered, was frustrated by Harrington, who had received intimation of their intention, hastening with his charge to Coventry. Elizabeth returned to this place in her declining years, after the misfortunes of her husband had been ended by death. She was supposed to have privately married Earl Craven, who had become the owner of Combe Abbey; and to him she left at her death her collection of pictures, which still adorns the gallery. It contains a large number of portraits of the Stuart family, and is a very interesting historical collection. From this place Coventry is not more than two miles distant, and no one who has not been there should be near it without visiting it, if only to see its almost matchless hall, and its two adjacent churches. Should the season serve, these should be seen by moonlight. Then the carvings and quaint tracery on St. Michael's marvellous tower and steeple assume a new guise, and the ravages which time has effected in the soft stone in which they are wrought pass unnoticed, and the silvery beams seem to linger over the grotesque figures, and lighten them into life, and the tall spire to melt into the soft embracing sky.

CHAPTER VI.

STONELEIGH.

In returning from Coventry, the river may be rejoined where it is crossed by the London road; or, still better, the lane at Wittenhall may be taken, and then turning into the fields by the first gateway on the left, a few steps will again place the rambler beside the Avon. There is no footpath, but there is no obstruction that any one who wishes to keep by the stream will heed. The way is close under the "Lodge" and the "Rock" farms, and so on to Broken Bridge, where you may turn aside to the pretty village of Baginton, and thence to Stoneleigh, or follow the river to Cloud Bridge, where it enters Stoneleigh Park. Here the Avon becomes a really picturesque stream—a character it retains for nearly the whole of its future course. On a clear summer's day the stroll we have now before us—through Stoneleigh Park, to Kenilworth, with a visit to Guy's Cliff by the declining sun—is one of the pleasantest as well as one of the most interesting possible.

As we saunter along on the soft turf by the river's margin, the eye is greeted with a continuous succession of cheerful landscapes. The stream meanders with a genial murmur through fertile meads, between banks, at one moment sloping so gently into its waters, that the ripple from the

faintest breeze washes over the daisies that bedeck them; and presently starting up steep, broken, with an old willow above, whose rugged roots, bared by the winter's floods, now afford a support to the pink convolvulus, and all form a picture that gazes lovingly at its reflection in the dark mirror below. On either hand are broad open lawns, and sunny slopes, running into bosky hillocks; a farm-house or two half-concealed among lofty trees; and the grey tower of the village church, with a few irregular roof-tops about it, and a dark mass of foliage beyond: — these are the features of the scene grouped differently at every bend of our playful stream, and with the blue sky and fleecy clouds above, they make many a picture that it does the heart good to look upon. Slowly will the rambler's feet move along this part of his journey, and grateful will be the remembrance of it.

The church-tower and the little village we saw on the opposite bank, bear the somewhat odd sounding name of Bubbenhall, or Bobenhall, or Bubnall, for it is spelt all these ways; though the first appears to be the correct one, the last is the way in which it is pronounced. Just beyond it is Broken Bridge, and soon after is Cloud Bridge, where, as has been mentioned, the river enters Stoneleigh Park. The village of Stoneleigh is to the right of the park, and a short distance from the Avon. It stands on a hill-side, at whose foot runs a tributary of the Avon—the Sow; why it has so uncleanly an appellation is hard to determine. Stoneleigh is a large village, and with the Sow, which is by no means sluggish, below it, a picturesque one. It was a royal demesne before the Norman Conquest; and it was after that event

held by William. The registers of this place are rather full, and a few details selected from the extracts made from them by that best of county historians, Dugdale, may be given as not only curious in themselves, but as throwing some light on the times to which they refer: and, as it is one of the most valuable habits that can be acquired by him who wishes to understand history, to unclothe a country, as it were, of all its recent features, every thing that aids him in doing so on any spot is useful. To trace downwards the home-history of a quiet country nook like this is a pleasant thing, and here are the materials with which to do it. This however I shall not attempt to do, but rather select a few notes that may assist one there to do something of the kind for himself.

The country was in early times a vast wild: the only trace of a village would be a few mud hovels—somewhat like those yet to be seen about the New Forest—huddled together, and here and there one of a somewhat better kind for the free tenants.

In Domesday, Stoneleigh woods are said to extend four miles in length and two in breadth—Kenilworth forming a part of them—and in them the king had feeding for two thousand hogs. The king's tenants (who were called *sokemanni*, or sokemen, as holding their lands in socage, *i.e.* by the tenure of the plough) were every three weeks to do their suit at the king's court, held for this manor on Motshill, whence its name, says Dugdale, the word *mote* being to this day used in the sense of pleadings by our lawyers. These sokemen each held a yard of land, equal to thirty acres, for which was paid thirty pence a year. The following are the leading services they were to

render as the tenure by which they held their lands :—

"Each of them, at his death, had to give an entire heriot, that is to say, his horse, harness, and his arms, if he had any; otherwise his best beast. And that the heir succeeding his father should be admitted to the inheritance at fifteen years of age, doubling his rent for a relief; and from thenceforth to be joined with the rest of the sokemanni in juries, &c., as if he had been of age.

"They were to have estovers in the outwoods, by the oversight of the foresters; to wit, housebote, heybote, and firebote, and the freedom of pannage for their own hogs; but for such hogs as they did buy after the nativity of St. John the Baptist, to give pannage."*

At the bederepe, or general reap of the lord's corn in harvest, they were to attend and see that their serfs worked diligently, "to amerce those in the court, then and there held, that made default or laboured idly. . . . They were to be in the field at sunrising, and work till sunset, not sitting down to breakfast, but each of them eating what he brought with him, as they went up and down the lands to their work; and after breakfast to sit down once before dinner, the lord finding them drink; but at noon both they and the sokemen to have meat and drink provided by the lord.

"The reapers were to eat by themselves, every one having a little wheat-loaf, four eggs, and

* *Housebote* is an allowance of wood sufficient to build or repair the house; *heybote* is the wood necessary for hedges, fences, &c.; and *firebote* is wood for fuel. Tenants taking more than sufficient for any of these purposes were punishable for waste.

pottage; viz. gruel, without flesh boiled in it, except the lord would afford them other, with cheese and beer sufficient, and after dinner one sitting down with bread and beer, but the sokemen themselves to be served with better diet, according to their degrees.

"And lastly, when the king should assess his boroughs and manors with tallage, he to have from the sokemen here the tenth part of their goods." This, together with personal service and attendance on his lord, was much like the usual feudal tenure at that period.

Stoneleigh continued to be the property of the Crown till the time of Henry II., who transferred the manor to the monks of Radmore, in Staffordshire, in exchange for their lands in that place. These monks were of the Cistercian order, and removed here directly after they had effected the exchange of lands with Henry. The first stone of the abbey was laid on April 1, 1154. The present mansion marks its site. What changes had taken place in the condition of the people of the manor since the time of the Conqueror, does not very clearly appear; yet that there was some difference may be gathered from the report drawn up in consequence of the transfer. "At the time when this monastery was so founded, there were in the manor of Stoneleigh sixty-eight villains, four *bordarii*, i.e. free-holders,* and two priests; all which held thirty carucates of land (as is exprest in Domesday Book). As also four bondmen or servants, whereof each held one messuage, and one quartrone of land, by the services of making the gallows, and hang-

* Dugdale's explanation is not correct here; they were rather cottagers.

ing of thieves: and every one of which bondmen was to wear a red clout betwixt his shoulders, upon his upper garment; to plow twice a year, to reap as oft, that is to say at the two bederepes; to give aid to the lord at the feast of St. Michael; to make the lord's malt, and to do other servile work."

Henry appears to have dealt liberally with the monks, especially in the privileges he bestowed upon them, "which were very many and very great; viz. free-warren, infangthef, outfangthef (that is the privilege of judging any thief who stole anything within the manor, whether he were taken *in* or *out* of it, so that the serfs were not likely to have a sinecure in the matter of the gallowses and the pleasant duty attached to them), wayfs, strays, goods of felons and fugitives, tumbrel, pillory, sok, sak, tole, team, amercements, murders, assize of bread and beer; with a market and fair in the town of Stoneleigh." Pretty comprehensive privileges truly! Fortunate was it for the helpless tenants that monks were the most merciful of lords. Having disposed of themselves so successfully, we may suppose these Radmore monks settled down quietly in their new possessions: and it does not appear that any very remarkable events happened to them. In 1245, indeed, the abbey was burnt down, but that was not at all a remarkable event in an ecclesiastical establishment in those times; and when it happened, the old building was generally replaced by a more elegant structure, all ranks gladly lending their aid for so good an object. The wealthy giving of their wealth, the poor of their toil; and the monks well knew how to employ both gold and willing hands. The

abbey was soon rebuilt; and the gateway then erected still remains—the only portion of the old building left—it serves as the entrance to the stables and servants' rooms attached to the present house. The monks grew in wealth, but not in worth. In the forty-third year of the reign of Henry III., "Divers of the monks grew so exorbitant, that they fell to wandering; insomuch as the King sent forth his precepts to all sheriffs and other his officers to apprehend and deliver them to the abbot for chastisement according to their demerits, and as their rule required." Which it may be hoped was dealt out to them without stint. Unfortunately these naughty doings did not cease with these monks; for something more than a century afterwards, viz. in the 38th of Edward III., there is a scandal brought forward against the abbot himself, which may be repeated for the sake of Dugdale's charitable conclusion. Thomas de Pipe, the then abbot, was charged, he tells us, with divers misapplications of the funds and estates of the monastery, "and this was alleged to be for the support of a concubine that he had, called Isabel Benshale, and his children by her, which were more in number, as the record says, than the monks then in the convent. . . . How he acquitted himself of this scandalous charge I know not; but certain it is, that the man was a person of notable parts, and deserved well of the house: for he composed that excellent Leiger book, being the transcript of their evidences, wherein are all things historically entered that concern this monastery; and very many particulars relating to the general story of the kingdom, especially of these parts, which are not elsewhere to be met with, whereof I

have made much use in this work; and for which his memory will be held of good esteem with all that are lovers of history." In olden times abbots made merry hosts. A traveller needed but to knock at the abbey door, and he met with a hearty welcome; and on the morrow came no reckoning. A dish of venison, or a dainty trout, and a stoup of good sack, he might always count upon; and a cheerful companion belike in the prior. Stoneleigh must have been a jovial place to visit then-a-days—so pleasantly situated, with plenty of game and fat beeves, and no lack of company, for there was another nest of monks just over at Kenilworth —the cell at Wolston—the abbey at Combe, and at Coventry there were black friars and grey, and a large number of other houses round about. Well, these days are gone, and the traveller must pay a long price for small port, or sour sherry, and make the best of it in the dingy parlour of his inn, and find no better company than an obsequious waiter. But the monks were good landlords too; and their poor neighbours were the better for their hospitality, as well as the stranger. Though it were too much to look for old customs to be brought back again, and open house for a wanderer would hardly do in these days; yet somewhat as regards them might be amended. A peer might let a little sunshine on a peasant—and the tenant need not alone see his landlord on a quarter-day. Stoneleigh Abbey this present year might have reminded a visitor of its ancient state. Long and free festivities in it graced the attaining of the majority of the heir to the wide domains. Lords and ladies mingled with farmers and countrywomen; good cheer was provided for all who would come, and,

though it happened but once in a generation, instead of annually, as in monkish days, all who came were the better for it.

This monastery, with all its evil and its good, and there was, in most of them, much of both, was with the other religious houses swept away at the dissolution; and of the old building only the gateway above mentioned remains. The Abbey was succeeded by a large brick mansion, built in the reign of Elizabeth by Sir Thomas Leigh, an alderman of London, who had purchased the manor. Of this edifice a large portion still stands, forming the back part of the present mansion, which is a dashing semi-classic pile, raised near the close of the last century. The direct line of the Leighs has become extinct, the present Lord Leigh (better known perhaps as Chandos Leigh, the author of a good many graceful poems) having adopted that name.

Stoneleigh Church has some Norman architecture about it; though the larger part of it is of a later date. In the interior is a monument of great splendour to Alice, Duchess of Dudley, the wife of Robert Dudley, son of the famous Earl of Leicester, and not, as has sometimes been stated, the lady who attempted unsuccessfully to prove herself the Earl's wife. *Her* name was Lady Douglas Howard, and she was the wife of Lord Sheffield prior to her connection with Leicester. The Sow works a factory-mill or two, and the village looks more prosperous than many in these parts. Its name (which signifies a stony place) is owing to the rock on which it stands; but the surface is said to be productive; and the most careless visitant will see that it is so evidently—in children. From

the village a lane of surpassing beauty runs up by Stoneleigh Park. It is cut through the rock which forms Motslow Hill, whereon the manor court used to be held. Trees of large size stretch their huge arms from both sides of it, and their thick foliage with the thousand choristers in it makes a gladsome roof. The steep rocky banks are covered with rich mosses and grey lichens, and brambles and wild rose-bushes find a root in their crevices.

The park is extensive, well wooded, varied in surface, and the river widens into a lake before the gay mansion; very beautiful is it to look down upon from the uplands. Antique oaks are scattered over it, and especially on its southern side, some are of enormous bulk. Under the shade of one of these a midsummer noon might be pleasantly spent—with a pleasant companion. The park affords a fitting scene to look out upon in an idle mood. Groups of trees everywhere adorn the plains and the hollows, and gather closely on the hill sides—not nobly wild as in a gloomy and savage forest, but well shapen, stately, magnificent, as become the denizens of a lordly domain. Herds of deer lie quietly under their broad shadows. Rooks swarm above them, mocking with their uneasy clatter the mid-day stillness. The sun glares over the lake, whose surface reflects a tremulous glitter on the white mansion. But we must away.

CHAPTER VII.

KENILWORTH, AND GUY'S CLIFF.

KENILWORTH is somewhat less than two miles from Stoneleigh Park on the west. You cross the park from the abbey to the West Lodge, and then across Glasshouse Wood and under Knowle Hill, a pleasant walk on a fine day, and nearer as well as pleasanter than the road. The Castle, which will of course be the main object of a visit, lies about half a mile beyond the town. Before making any remarks on the present appearance and condition of Kenilworth Castle, I shall sketch its history as briefly as may be. Kenilworth was anciently a royal demesne along with Stoneleigh, and there was a royal castle belonging to it, which stood, however, not on the site of the present one, but on Hom Hill, beside the Avon, and nearly opposite Stoneleigh Abbey: it was destroyed early in the eleventh century. The present castle originated with Geoffrey de Clinton, to whom the manor of Kenilworth was assigned by Henry I. Geoffrey built a strong castle here, and at the same time founded a monastery, of which somewhat more hereafter. The Clintons did not long retain possession of Kenilworth, for in the eleventh of Henry II. it was in the hands of that monarch, who in the nineteenth year of his reign placed a strong garrison in it on the rebellion of his eldest

son; and though afterwards a Clinton held it for a few years, in the beginning of John's reign, he assigned all his interest in it to the king. Henry III. largely repaired and adorned it: and in the twenty-eighth year of his reign he created Simon de Montfort governor of it.

With De Montfort the historical interest of it commences. After he had been ten years its governor the king made him a grant of it for his life, 1254. When De Montfort and the barons in 1263 began to set about war in earnest with the king, Kenilworth Castle was strongly fortified by him, and "stored with many kinds of warlike engines till that time never seen nor heard of in England." De Montfort was himself with the army of the barons, but he sent to the castle John Giffard, "a knight of much valour, but one of the most desperate rebels, to be governor thereof." Giffard did not confine himself to the castle. William Mauduit, Earl of Warwick, stedfastly refused to join the barons, and Giffard, watching his time, succeeded by a stratagem in surprising Warwick Castle, which he then rendered untenable; at the same time carrying the earl and his countess prisoners to Kenilworth.

After the decisive battle of Evesham, 1265, de Montfort's son, together with many of the nobles, escaped here, and held out resolutely against the whole power of the king, who in person conducted the siege. De Montfort's "strange engines" threw out great stones and other missiles upon the besiegers whenever they ventured near the walls; the garrison too made frequent sallies, and greatly annoyed their assailants in various ways. The king attempted in many modes to induce them to

Kenilworth.

surrender, without effect. Assembling his council, he passed certain "articles of mercy" (known as the Dictum of Kenilworth), offering pardon on moderate terms to whoever would submit themselves, but the party within the walls refused to accept them, on the plea that they had not taken part in the framing of them. He also called in the aid of the papal legate, Attobon, but they equally disregarded his censure. They were probably doubtful of the king's honesty; and had there not been a stronger enemy than Henry within the walls, it is not likely that they would have yielded possession of the castle but with their lives. The siege had lasted nearly six months, and Henry resolved at length to storm the castle: a difficult and laborious task before artillery was invented. His preparations, indeed, show how great an undertaking the storming of a castle strong in itself, well fortified, and garrisoned by skilful and desperate men, was thought to be. Henry not only strengthened his army, but called in aid after a fashion that seems singular now; for he issued a special writ, bearing date November 20, commanding the sheriff of this shire to bring in by a certain day "all the masons and other labourers within his precincts, with their hatchets, pickaxes, and other tools." But before they could be assembled the garrison requested a truce that they might communicate with young de Montfort, who had gone beyond the seas (though some affirmed he was but at Ely), and then unless he would engage to relieve them by a fixed day they would surrender. To this Henry willingly agreed. The besieged had been driven to make this proposal by the inroads of famine and pestilence. Their numbers were

daily lessening from these causes, which neither gallantry nor skill could alleviate; and at length so terrible were their straits, and so grievous the increase of the disease, that it became impossible longer to resist. Accordingly, although the day agreed upon had not arrived, they capitulated on honourable terms—viz. "that Henry de Hastings, the governor, with all the rest that were therein, should have four days' time to carry out all their goods, and go freely away, with horses, arms, and all accoutrements, throughout any part of the kingdom." Terms honourable alike to the besieger and the besieged. The siege lasted from "the morrow after the feast of the nativity of St. John the Baptist (June 25) till the feast-day of St. Thomas the Apostle (December 21)."

Henry gave the castle to his younger son Edmund, whom he created Earl of Leicester after the death of Simon de Montfort. Edmund soon after held a grand tournament here; at which there was "a great and famous concourse of noble persons, whereof divers repaired from foreign parts." All the splendour that was usual on such occasions, when princes made the show and nobles were the players, was here exhibited. There were the tiltings, and the jousts, and the gay apparel, fair ladies, and brave knights. There were beating hearts and bright eyes; there were seen young gallants with their ladies' sleeves on their helms, or the gloves of their darling; and many a spear was shivered for love of lady. But by award of the fair dames Roger Mortimer and the Earl of March bore off the prizes and got the honours. And then there was the round table, as in good King Arthur's days, and a hundred knights and

beauteous ladies sat thereat and feasted joyously; and afterwards there was dancing with the lovely damosels, who were all clad in silken mantles. So from the eve of St. Matthew the Apostle till the morrow after Michaelmas were ten days spent right pleasantly, and then all departed.

The next notable occurrence at the castle was of a less cheerful character. Edward II., after he had been taken prisoner by the Earl of Lancaster in South Wales, was conveyed first to Ledbury, and then to Kenilworth, where he was carried in December, 1326. In January, 1327, a parliament was assembled at Guildhall, and after receiving a report from a committee that had been deputed to visit the king, to the effect that he declined to return to his capital to confer with his parliament on the exigencies of the state, though it is not at all likely that he would have been allowed to do so had he been willing—they resolved that Edward was incapable of government, and that his son should be crowned king in his stead. Edward was at Kenilworth when the deputation from the parliament announced this resolution to him, and William Trussell, in the name of that assembly and of the whole people of England, solemnly withdrew the fealty and homage sworn to him. Edward remained at Kenilworth in close but mild confinement during the spring of this year; when he was conveyed to Berkeley Castle, and soon met with a barbarous death. In the reign of Henry III. the castle was granted to John of Gaunt, who made large and costly additions to it. Dugdale assigns to him "the structure of all the ancient buildings here, now remaining, excepting Cæsar's tower and the outer walls and turrets, which were

raised towards the latter end of the reign of Richard II. His son Henry IV. having inherited the castle, reunited it to the domains of the crown. It received additions and reparations from the succeeding sovereigns to the time of Henry VIII.," who bestowed much cost in the repairing thereof. By Elizabeth it was granted to her favourite, Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester, who made it the magnificent place its ruins now show it to have been. Besides the gate-house, which still exists, and which, as Sir Walter Scott remarks, " is equal in extent, and superior in architecture, to the baronial castle of many a northern chief;" he also built the gallery-tower at the end of the long jousting gallery, from whence the ladies might behold the tourneys, and the noble pile called " Leicester's buildings;" rebuilt Mortimer's tower, and enlarged the chase. In addition to all which he fitted up the whole interior on a scale of splendour till then almost unknown. Dugdale says, " I have heard some, who were his servants, say, that the charge he bestowed on this castle with the parks and chase thereunto belonging, was no less than 60,000*l.*;" a sum equal to at least half a million in our days.

The magic power of the Northern Wizard has brought the splendours of the " princely pleasures" wherewith Dudley greeted his royal mistress before us, much as those Eastern magi are said to exhibit to their visitants the reflections of distant scenes and personages—shadows indeed, but with life and motion in them. And however daring are the anachronisms with which the historic portions of the tale are filled, this part at least is as true as it is vivid.

Leicester died in 1588; he bequeathed Kenilworth to his brother Ambrose, Earl of Warwick, for his life, and the reversion to his son (whom, in his will, he styles "my *base* son"), Sir Robert Dudley. Sir Robert succeeded, by the death of his uncle, to the possession of Kenilworth in little more than a year after the death of his father. He married Alice, daughter of Sir Thomas Leigh, of Stoneleigh, and, in the beginning of the reign of James, endeavoured to establish his legitimacy; which, if he had succeeded in doing, the castle of Warwick, and other large possessions, would have accrued to him as heir to his uncle, who had left no issue. The testimony of his mother is remarkable, and has furnished Sir Walter Scott with many hints: he transferred much that belongs to her to Amy Robsart, who *was* acknowledged by Leicester as his wife. Dudley's mother was a Lady Douglas Howard, the granddaughter of the Duke of Norfolk, and widow of Lord Sheffield, at the time of Leicester's connection with her. Lord Sheffield was reported to have died of "a Leicester cold," in order to facilitate the intimacy. Her statement, which was fully corroborated in all essential particulars, was to the effect that "She having been first contracted in Cannon-row, Westminster, about two years before, was solemnly wedded to him in her chamber, at Esher in Surrey, by a lawful minister, according to the forms of the Church of England, in the presence of Sir E. Horsey, Knt., that gave her in marriage, and also of E. Sheffield, Esq., and his wife, Dr. Julio,* and five others

* An Italian physician who is reported to have aided Leicester by preparing prescriptions that should effectually cure any whom Leicester wished him to exert his skill upon,

named. The ring wherewith they were so married was set with five pointed (rose) diamonds and a table diamond, which had been given to the earl by the Earl of Pembroke's grandfather, upon condition that he should not bestow it upon any but her whom he did make his wife * And, moreover, that the Duke of Norfolk was the prime mover of the marriage; but that the earl, pretending a fear of the queen's indignation in case it should come to her knowledge, made her vow not to reveal it till he gave her leave." The earl, if the evidence may be credited, continued to acknowledge her as his wife, and directed that she should be served in her retirement as a countess; and spoke of the child his son as legitimate, till his marriage with the Countess of Essex. After which the two ladies were commonly spoken of as "Lord Leicester's two testaments," Lady Douglas being the old, and Lady Essex the new. To stop the scandal he attempted to persuade Lady Douglas to disclaim her marriage, offering her 700*l.* per annum "in the close arbour of the queen's garden at Greenwich, in the presence of Sir John Huband and Geo. Digby, in case she would do so; and upon her refusing, terrifying her with protestations that he would never come near her, and that she should never have penny of him." He afterwards offered her 1000*l.* to deliver her son into the hands of Sir E. Horsey, captain of the Isle of Wight, intending, as she thought, but probably without cause, "foul play to him," as he did afterwards get possession

and whose death was thought to have been brought about by a dose that Leicester compounded *without his* assistance.

* A custom, it will be remembered, Shakspere often alludes to.

of him and had him carefully educated. She further deposed, "that she believed he also meant to despatch her out of the world: for certain it is that she had some ill potions given her; so that with the loss of her hair and her nails, she hardly escaped death. As the only way to protect herself from his vengeance, she contracted marriage with Sir E. Stafford (a person of great honour and parts, and some time ambassador in France), whereof she deeply repented afterward, as having done the greatest wrong that could be to herself and son." These proceedings were brought to a sudden stop, at the suit of Leicester's widow, the Lady Lettice: the Star Chamber ordered the papers to be sealed up, and the principal witnesses "to be held suspect." No allusion whatever is made in the order to the evidence of Lady Douglas. Sir Robert Dudley, "struck with amazement at this decision," immediately went off to Italy, where he remained for the rest of his life. James, having heard of the value of his estates, commanded him to return, and on his neglecting to do so, sequestered his property; reserving a dower to Lady Dudley, whom her husband had left behind. Dudley, having procured a dispensation from the Pope, married a lady in Florence, who accompanied him from England in the disguise of a page, and had several children, most of whom married into noble families. He was a great favourite with the Duke of Florence, who created him a duke, and he assumed the title of Duke of Northumberland. Prince Henry, the eldest son of James I., being desirous of obtaining Kenilworth, offered to purchase Dudley's title to it, and agreed to give him 14,500*l.* for it (by the king's commissioners, who, by their own account, valued

it at little more than half its real worth, it had been estimated at about twice that sum); but only 3000*l.* were ever paid, and of that Dudley received none. On the death of Prince Henry, Kenilworth passed to his brother Charles as his heir, who bargained with the Lady Dudley for the purchase of her jointure for 4000*l.* He afterwards created her Duchess of Dudley, and in the patent declared that the legitimacy of Sir Robert Dudley had been fully established. When Cromwell was in the ascendant, Kenilworth was partitioned among his captains, and dismantled. It speedily became a ruin, and served, till the beginning of the present century, as a quarry for the neighbourhood. A strange melancholy creeps over the visitant as he wanders amid these grey grim ruins, and thinks of those who have been their inmates—of the scenes of festivity which they have witnessed—of the revolutions which have brought them to their present state of gloom and desolation, when they might still have been so fresh and so beautiful. "The historian of Warwickshire has given us 'the ground-plan of Kenilworth castle,' as it was in 1640. By this we may trace the pool and the pleasance; the inner court, the base court, and the tilt-yard; Cæsar's tower and Mortimer's tower; King Henry's lodgings and Leicester's buildings; the hall, the presence chamber, and the privy chamber. There was an old fresco painting, too, upon a wall at Newnham Padox, which was copied in 1716, and is held to represent the castle in the time of James I. Without these aids Kenilworth would only appear to us a mysterious mass of ruined gigantic walls; deep cavities, whose uses are unknown; arched doorways, separated from the

chambers to which they led; narrow staircases suddenly opening into magnificent recesses, with their oriels looking over corn-fields and pasture; a hall, with its lofty windows and its massive chimney-pieces still entire, but without roof or flooring; mounds of earth in the midst of walled chambers, and the hawthorn growing where the doors stood. The desolation would probably have gone on for another century; the stones of Kenilworth would still have mended roads, and been built into the cowshed and the cottage, till the ploughshare had been carried over the grassy courts, had not, some twenty-five years ago, a man of middle age, with a lofty forehead and a keen grey eye, slightly lame but withal active, entered its gatehouse, and having looked upon the only bit of carving left to tell something of interior magnificence, passed into those ruins, and stood there silent for some two hours.

"Then was the ruin henceforth to be sanctified. The progress of desolation was to be arrested. The torch of genius again lighted 'up every room so spacious,' and they were for ever after to be associated with the recollections of their ancient splendour. There were to be visions of sorrow and suffering there too; woman's weakness, man's treachery. And now Kenilworth is a place which is worthily visited from all lands. The solitary artist sits on the stone seat of the great bay-window and sketches

* A few years ago there was a venerable and intelligent farmer, Mr. Bonington, living in the Gatehouse at Kenilworth. He remembered Scott's visit, although he knew not at the time of the visit who he was; and the frank manners and keen inquiries of the great novelist left an impression upon him which he described to us. The old man is dead.

Entrance to Kenilworth Hall.

the hall, where he fancies Elizabeth banqueting. A knot of young antiquarians ascending a narrow staircase, would identify the turret as that in which Amy Robsart took refuge. Happy children run up and down the glassy slopes, and wonder who made so pretty a ruin. The contemplative man rejoices that the ever-vivifying power of nature throws its green mantle over what would be ugly in decay; and that, in the same way, the poetical power invests the desolate places with life and beauty, and, when the material erections of ambition lie perishing, builds them up again, not to be again destroyed." *

Before quitting Kenilworth let us just glance around the town. It consists of one long street, and the houses are decent-looking, but none remarkable. One thing will, however, not escape notice—the number of them that are closed. Kenilworth, in truth, is not in a flourishing state, and scarcely is likely soon again to be. The church is an interesting pile, having a doorway of the Norman period, richly carved. The other parts of it are of a later date, and not very striking in their character. Near the church stood the monastery for Augustinian friars, spoken of already. As there stated, it was founded by Geoffrey de Clinton when he erected his castle; in accordance with the strong religious feelings of those days, which led men almost always, when they raised a house for themselves, to do somewhat towards erecting or adorning one for Him, in grateful acknowledgment that from Him was derived all which they possessed. Geoffrey provided so handsomely for his monks that

* William Shakspere: a Biography.

it must have been their own fault if they fared amiss: assigning to them a tithe of all the eatables that entered the castle; and a day's fishing in the castle ponds each week, so that their Fridays needed not to have been fast-days. Along with these he gave them other substantial endowments. Those who succeeded him in the possession of the castle, as may be supposed, did not neglect the friars. Lords and ladies vied with each other in adding to their possessions, till, as Dugdale says, "thus was their plenty very great, wanting nothing that might be useful to them in a full and fit manner, even to the meanest conveniences: King Henry III. granting them liberty to conduct spring-water, by pipes, from a pure fountain which lay fit for that purpose, to the several offices in the monastery." They lost none of their good things till all was swept away by the most religious Henry VIII., when, of course, monastery and all else went to enrich some precious courtier, of like burning zeal with his master. There is "nothing now remaining of it, but a very great bell yet hanging in the present parish church," and perhaps a fragment of one of its walls.

The visitor will no doubt at once proceed from Kenilworth to Guy's Cliff: but our narrative must carry us back again to Stoneleigh Park.

After passing Stoneleigh Abbey the river makes a large curve round the foot of a hill, probably that on which the original castle of Kenilworth stood, and then winds back again, and quits the park at Ashow. All along there the scenery is exceedingly beautiful, whether the eye be directed up or down the stream. There is nothing to call for notice at Ashow, or at Chesford Bridge, the next place arrived at; nor, excepting that none of its

beauty is there lost, at Blakedon Hill. The valley through which flows the river is crossed a short distance past this place by a long viaduct of the railway that runs from Coventry to Warwick; soon after which the stream runs under Hill Wotton, and then close by the pleasant village of Leek Wotton. Near this last village is Blacklow Hill, where, on the 19th of June, 1312, was beheaded Pierce Gaveston, the favourite of Edward II. He had been carried to Warwick Castle; and there, as the barons were debating about his fate, a voice was heard from one of them—"You have caught the fox; if you let him go, you will have to hunt him again." This at once settled the matter. He was hurried to Blacklow Hill, and there immediately executed. In commemoration whereof this inscription was rudely cut in the rock: "P. GAVESTON, EARL OF CORNWALL, BEHEADED HERE + 1311." A few years back a cross was erected on the summit of the hill.

On the left side of our river stands Milverton Church, prettily situated on a low hill. The church is very small, with a little oddly-contrived wooden tower. Both tower and churchyard have a kind of make-shift appearance that is very curious. And scarcely less curious is the fashion in which the several objects about run into each other. The church seems a part of the adjoining farm-yard; the farm-yard appears to belong to the road; and the road loses itself in the fields. It is a grand sight to stand on the slope of this hill on a fine evening and look westward as the sun is disappearing behind the luxuriant woods of Guy's Cliff, and that romantic place, with its groves, cliffs, caves, its lofty trees and broad-spread stream,

Mill at Guy's Cliff.

are all sharing in the splendour of his departing largess.

But what a dainty place that Mill of Guy's Cliff is as we come upon it this way! Never was such another mill surely. A long, low building it is, shaped in the quaintest fashion, with a lightsome, recessed, open gallery, supported by thin pillars, running along the front; a large black wheel, within a dark chamber, is at each end; a narrow roadway runs before it, separated from the river below by a sort of parapet wall formed of huge unhewn stones, over which a pretty lass is leaning to watch the sparkling and frothy water as it rushes out from the rough handling of the great mill-wheel; a grove of stately elms leads to it; on one side is a wide weir almost like a cataract—placed, too, in one of the loveliest of spots—and raising, from its antique appearance, visions of the days when we fancy labour had so much of sunshine thrown around it. This mill is quite an object to treasure up in the memory.

Guy's Cliff itself has formed a theme for admiring description from earliest times. Leland has left us an account of it, in which the good old antiquary breaks out into a most unwonted tone of enthusiasm. Dugdale quotes his account with full accord. Fuller swells out into a cheerful pæan—almost forgetting, in his admiration, to make merry with it. It is no use going on: who ever saw it, and did not admire it? And, admiring, did not seek to describe it: in prose from Leland's time, and in verse from that of Drayton? I thought of spending a page or two upon it; but I will not. For me Guy's Cliff shall be undescribed—I will not even give a list of its glories: untold by me shall

be its majestic trees, its caves, its steep rocks, its pleasant walks, its lovely prospects; the beauty of the river there, the freshness of the verdure: the fragrant flowers, the clear springs; the seclusion, the tranquillity: none of these, or of the thousand other delights that gladden the senses there, will I speak of. Everybody speaks of them. But here is a little chapel, and in it a statue of a goodly knight, whom kings used to honour—and, better still, the poets have sung of, from our Homers the ballad-makers, who with hearty fulness rehearsed his deeds, down to Chaucer, and Shakspere, and Drayton, who have at least mentioned him. But nobody names him now. He is gone, forgotten, except by poetic antiquaries. Drayton informs us that

"Tow'rds Warwick with her train as Avon trips along,
To Guy-cliff being come, her nymphs thus bravely song—
To thee, renowned Knight, continual praise we owe."

The learned have not determined exactly when Guy lived, and some even doubt whether he ever lived at all. Let them settle that: it is none of our business. His legend is too long, or it would be pleasant to tell it in its olden form, but there is here room only for the conclusion of it, which relates to this place. After he had slain Colbrand, the Danish giant, at Winchester, he set out on his way alone and afoot, and so continued till he came to Warwick, where was his castle, and where abode his beloved Phillis. And when he came there he waited at the door of his own house, and there his lady was wont every day to feed thirteen poor men with her own hand, desiring of them to pray for her lord and for herself. Him she knew not, but

gave food to him for three days. Then he went to a fair rocky place beside the river that flows past his castle, and there dwelt a holy man, whom Guy made himself known unto, but straitly forbade him to tell any man. Then he hewed himself a cell out of the rock, and there he dwelt, and no man knew him: and this cell is to be seen to this day, and the place is called Guy's Cliff in memory of him. But soon after he fell sick; and when he knew he was near to his death, he sent a ring to his lady, who knew nothing where he was, but sorrowed sore for him, signifying to her that she should come and bury him. She hastened to him

Statue at Guy's Cliff.

instantly, and closed his dying eyes, and buried him where he desired, and soon after died also, and was laid beside him. And in memory of Sir Guy was set up a fair effigy which remaineth there until now.

Guy's Cliff was a favourite place with the hermits, many of whom have lived here sequestered from the world. "Some will say it is too gaudy a place for that purpose, as having more of a paradise than wilderness therein, so that men's thoughts would rather be scattered than collected with such various objects. But seeing hermits deny themselves the company of men, let them be allowed to converse with the rarities of nature; and such are the fittest texts for a solitary devotion to comment upon." (Fuller.) St. Dubritius was, if record be true, the first who fixed on it for that purpose, and here built an oratory. After him followed divers others; till in the eighth of Edward III., Thomas de Lewes, being a hermit, received the king's letter of protection for himself and his goods; and in the tenth of Henry IV., John Burry, a hermit, here had granted to him a salary of an hundred shillings by the year to pray for the good estate of Richard Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick, as also for the souls of the Earl's father and mother. King Henry V., who, being a brave man himself, loved the memory of other brave men, being on a time at Warwick, came here to "do respect to the memory of Sir Guy, as also to view the rareness of the situation of the place." And he was minded to found a chantry here for two priests; but death, who respecteth not mighty kings more than poor beggars, prevented him. However, the forenamed Richard Beauchamp desiring that what the good king purposed

o do might not fall to the ground, obtained licence of his successor to do what the king intended, and at his death he directed his executors to set up a goodly statue to his ancestor Sir Guy. One of the first of these chantry priests left a name that has come down to our own day—John Rous, one of the earliest of our antiquaries. He came here in the reign of Edward IV.; and while in this pleasant retirement wrote his 'Antiquities of Warwick,' relating chiefly to its earls, and a 'Chronicle of the Kings of England.' Dugdale made much use of his Antiquities.

As has been already said, it is one of the very loveliest spots that can anywhere (out of a mountain region) be found. The old chapel remains, and by it is erected a handsome mansion, the residence of Bertie Greathead, Esq. The grounds are not extensive, but beautiful as those Boccaccio sung and Stothard painted.

CHAPTER VIII.

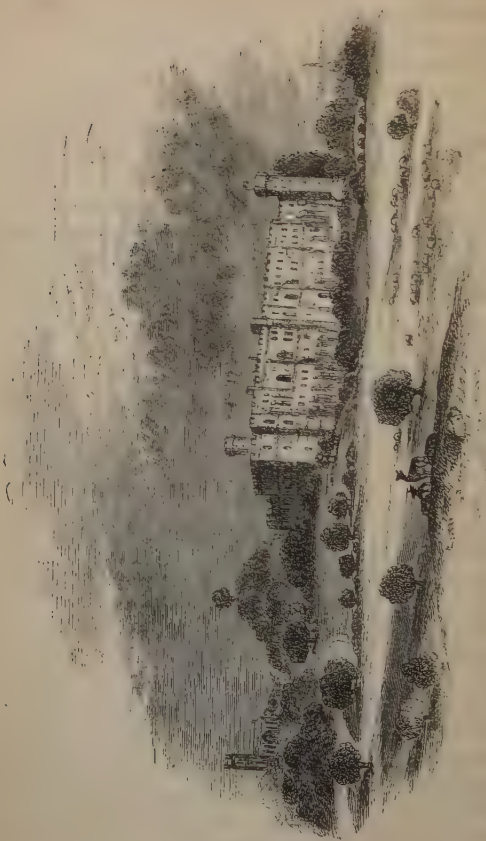
WARWICK.

The approach to Warwick from the river is of surpassing beauty. Not on account of the town, for that is scarcely seen, but from the noble pile which dignifies it, and which rears its long front and dark towers with stern majesty against the sky. From no other spot is Warwick Castle seen to so great advantage as from the foot of the bridge which crosses the Avon on the Leamington road. The town lies away on the right, and nothing interferes with the magnificent edifice. The long embattled front stretches along the river; the lofty massive towers mark the extent of the hidden parts of the castle, and impart a severe grandeur to that which is seen, which the black cedars and lofty heads of the Weymouth pines rather increase than detract from. The castle is built upon a rock that here rises abruptly from the Avon, out of which rock and castle seem to grow. The river is broken by an islet or two, and its banks, up to the rock on which the castle is built, are low and swampy, and covered with osiers; and alders and willows fringe its borders and dip into the stream. Tall and stately trees gird the castle, while on the low ground beneath its walls a few mean houses are crowded, as it were for protection. And thus

in lordly isolation the castle is seen undisturbed by aught that can interfere with its impressiveness—stern, stately, uninjured alike by time and the less tender hand of modern refinement.

If the visitor gazes from this spot as the sun is sinking behind the castle and towers, trees and stream are clothed in a gorgeous mantle of hazy splendour, and the pinky mists are creeping up from the reedy waters below; or when the summer moon is casting over it a veil of solemn shadow, it will appear as though those grand old feudal times were returned, and here before him was indeed the castle of a Nevil, and those huts from which the blue smoke is curling were the homes of his humble retainers; the flickering light at the castle windows, the black towers, the huge mass of the building, the dark sky and the stars above, and the murmur of the water falling over the weir, and the still sough of the wind through the willows, the uncertain gloom, and the half-unconscious influence of the associations, will all assist in deepening the impressive sublimity of the scene.

Warwick Castle is undoubtedly the finest and most perfect remain of feudal splendour in England. Its history is in fact the history of the Earls of Warwick, and that were something of the longest for a work like this. Yet it will perhaps be expected that a few words should be said about them. History acknowledges no earl prior to the one created by the Conqueror. He was a Norman named Newburgh, and Newburgh continued to be the name of the earls for a century and a quarter after his death, when the line became extinct. The earldom passed to several of the collateral branches of the family, among others to William



Warwick, from Lodge Hill.

Mauduit, of whom mention has been made; but none of them leaving issue, in 1267 William Beauchamp, a nephew of Mauduit, succeeded him, and in his line it continued till 1449. Several of the Beauchamps were men of fame. Richard, who succeeded to the title on the death of his father Thomas, the eleventh earl, in 1401, is the earl whom Shakspere makes Henry mention with so great honour at Agincourt:—

> "Then shall our names,
> Familiar in their mouths as household words,—
> Harry the king, Bedford, and Exeter,
> Warwick and Talbot, Salisbury and Gloucester,—
> Be in their flowing cups freshly remembered."

His life was a busy one. He was actively engaged against the rebels in Wales in the early part of the reign of Henry IV., and took Owen Glendower's banner. He was present at the defeat of the Percies at the terrible battle of Shrewsbury, and for his services on that occasion was knighted by the king. He then visited the Holy Land, holding some jousts in the great continental cities he passed through on his way, like a true knight, "against all comers;" and he made good his challenge. In Palestine he was right sumptuously feasted by Baltredam, the soldan's lieutenant, because he had heard "that he was descended from the famous Sir Guy of Warwick," of whom they had accounts in their books. Baltredam, at parting, presented him with three precious stones of great value, besides divers clothes of silk and gold given to his servants. He was also in high honour with Henry V., under whom he served with distinction in France; he was sent by Henry as ambassador

to arrange his marriage with Katherine, the daughter of the French King. In the reign of Henry VI. he carried over 6000 men to reinforce the army in France under the charge of the Duke of Bedford; and when that nobleman soon after returned to England, Warwick supplied his place as Regent of France. In this office he greatly distinguished himself, particularly in the field. Three years afterwards he returned to England, and was appointed "Governor of the young king, instead of Thomas, Duke of Exeter, late departed to God." (Hall.) This office he continued to hold till 1437, when he succeeded the Duke of York as Regent of France. In 1439 he died at Rouen; his corpse was brought to England, and interred in the chapel erected for the purpose by his successors, and called after him the Beauchamp Chapel; of its kind perhaps only surpassed by that of Henry VII. at Westminster.

In 1449 Richard Nevil, eldest son of the Earl of Salisbury, was created Earl of Warwick on the decease without issue of Anne, Countess of Warwick: he derived his title to the earldom from his marriage with Anne, daughter of Richard Beauchamp, by his second wife. Of this Earl of Warwick it were idle to say anything. He is *the* Earl of Warwick, the King-maker, Shakspere's Earl. All things considered, perhaps the most famous noble in the English Peerage—made so by a mightier King-maker than himself. He is the central figure in Shakspere's history of the Wars of the Roses; from the moment of his uttering his "dreadful oath," till he "bids all farewell in death," he is the motive power in that strange contest; and though modern research has shown

some matters in Shakspere's account to be inaccurate, yet it has not removed Warwick from his pre-eminence, nor can it; Shakspere's portraiture of the man is as true as it is masterly—and it is broad and forcible as one of Michael Angelo's giant-like statues. He could have been none other than Shakspere drew—fierce, fearless, haughty, turbulent, yet with a chivalric honour. An Achilles without his steadiness of purpose, without his accomplishments, not without his boasting or his vengeful spirit. Everything about him was on an enlarged scale. His father refers to his "housekeeping as having won him greatest favour of the commons,"* and we may form a notion of the magnitude of his establishment, and of all about him and his housekeeping, by a few words from Stow, who tells us that "when Richard Nevil attended the parliament in London, he brought with him six hundred men, all in red jackets, embroidered with ragged staffs, both before and behind; and were lodged in Warwick-lane: in whose house six oxen were oft eaten at a breakfast, and every tavern was full of his meat; for who that had any acquaintance in that house, he should have had as much sodden and roast as he might carry upon a long dagger."

After the death of the King-maker at Barnet field, his honours were forfeited, and the title was conferred on George Plantagenet, Duke of Clarence, who had married his daughter Isabel. He was murdered in the Tower, and attainted in 1478, but his son bore the title till he, in 1499, met a like fate with his father. From his death there was no Earl of Warwick till 1547, when Edward VI.

* 'Henry VI.,' Part II., Act i., sc. 1.

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conferred the title on John Dudley (afterwards created Duke of Northumberland), who was descended on his mother's side from Richard Beauchamp, the twelfth earl. He, too, met with a violent death, being attainted and beheaded in 1553. Nine years afterwards, his second son, Ambrose Dudley (his eldest son was the celebrated Earl of Leicester), was restored in blood, and created Earl of Warwick by Queen Elizabeth. He died without issue in 1589; the first of his title who had died peacefully for a century and a half. The title remained in abeyance from this time till 1618, when it was conferred by James I. upon Robert, Lord Rich, in whose family it remained till the death of Edward Rich, Earl of Warwick and Holland, without male issue in 1759. It was then bestowed upon a descendant of Fulke Greville, and in that family it still remains. The Grevilles are descendants by marriage from the William Mauduit, above spoken of, created Earl of Warwick in 1267. By them the earldom of Warwick is held in conjunction with that of Brooke.

The events that have happened in connection with the castle have been less remarkable than might have been expected from the character and fortunes of its famous possessors. It has not undergone any prolonged or fierce sieges, partly perhaps because of its strength. In the early part of the Barons' war, as was mentioned, it was surprised by the governor of Kenilworth Castle; in the Parliamentary War the royalist troops attempted unsuccessfully to obtain possession of it. Of course, as the chief residence of the Beauchamps and Nevils, it has been the scene of many a splendid and of many a grave occurrence: monarchs

have been entertained in it, both as guests and as captives; and monarchs' favourites have been hurried from it to death.

The entrance to the noble building is by a long, winding, and rather narrow passage, cut through the rock, from which you catch only occasional glimpses of the towers and battlements. It is not till the great gate-house is passed that its gigantic proportions are seen. A chained dog is its only warder now—a noble animal, who lies stretched under a great tree, and, as though conscious that he is there merely for show, he disdains even to question the visitors by a growl. That part of the castle which serves as a residence stands on your left, its principal front is towards the river, along which it stretches for four hundred feet. A strong outer wall, with all needful defences, encloses the great base court, and was surrounded by a wide and deep moat, but this is now drained and green. At the north-east angle of the wall, the right-hand corner as you enter, is a large and massive tower, rising to a height of more than a hundred feet: it was erected in 1394, and bears the name of Guy, in honour perhaps of the famous Guy whose memory was cherished by the successive Earls of Warwick, some of whom have themselves borne the name. Its walls are ten feet thick; and it has rooms for its defenders, with loopholes in them for firing from, so arranged as to command a wide extent. The view from its summit is a magnificent one. On the left is a still older and stronger tower, the great keep of the castle. This is called Cæsar's tower, and is deserving of careful regard. It rises out of a huge mass of rock, and as you stand at its

base and look upwards, has a most grim aspect. In it is a dungeon cut out of the solid rock—a dismal place it must have been to get fastened into. The great range of buildings, which forms the lordly dwelling, has lost a little of its original appearance by the substitution of somewhat larger windows, but its character has been preserved as much as possible, consistently with rendering it a residence that should accord with the graces of our more polished age. The interior is fitted up with great splendour, and has some noble rooms. The great hall has recently been restored, so as to bear somewhat the appearance of feudal times—it had been, as the old all-praising description said, "adorned with a ceiling beautifully ornamented with *plaster*," and other beautiful bedizenments. It is a fine room, sixty-two feet by thirty-seven; and in a dull winter's day, when it is lit up only by the huge logs that are burning on the hearth, with its antique furniture, the ancient arms that stand about, or are, along with branching antlers, suspended from its walls, it only requires a stalwart figure or two in buff-jerkins to render the illusion complete—but a glance at the silk stockings of the powdered footman, or even your own external man, puts all feudal fancies to instant flight. There are several rooms of fine proportions, and they are, as would be expected, richly furnished. This is not the place to describe them. That is the province of the printed 'Guide' and the living cicerone. One room, however, is deserving of especial notice, the cedar-room as it is called; it is of large size, and very striking from its cedar wainscoting, its splendid furniture, and its noble pictures; and from

its windows a view is obtained over the grounds that surpasses all besides.* In this and other apartments in the castle is contained a large and fine collection of paintings. Several of Vandyke's portraits are here, and some of them of much historic interest. Indeed Warwick Castle is rather fortunate as well as rich in historic portraits, possessing among others Rubens' portrait of Ignatius Loyola, a striking picture, though one misses the dark keen thoughtful character of the man; it rather represents a mystic or enthusiast, and though he was perhaps both, he was something besides: there is also a portrait of Gondomar by Velasquez; Charles I. and his Queen by Vandyke, and a long list of others. A curious collection of ancient arms and armour is arranged in a long gallery not less curious, being cut out of the massive walls. In striking contrast to which is "her Ladyship's boudoir," a little room fitted up in the highest reach of modern luxury. It is a dainty little place, full of dainty little contrivances, and should be seen if permission can be obtained: could the wife of the King-maker look upon the assemblage of nick-nackeries here collected, her astonishment would be unbounded. She would wonder what could have induced the invention of such an endless variety of unimaginable articles; and perhaps draw unfriendly comparisons between their flimsiness and her own more substantial and not less expensive paraphernalia—but no doubt, in the end,

* Fuller has noticed this look-out in his own matchless way: "The prospect is pleasant in itself, and far more to the present owner thereof, the Right Honourable Robert, Lord Brooke, seeing the windows look into lands mostly of his possession."

like a very woman, she would give the preference to the newest, and think their number not one too many.

The grounds of the castle are extensive, and beautifully laid out—not like Chatsworth, but Chatsworth gardens would be out of place here. In a large greenhouse in these grounds is the famous Warwick Vase, brought from Italy by the late earl. It is of marble, and of very large size. Its beauty is such as would alone render Warwick attractive. Before leaving the place altogether the porter at the gate-house will probably call the visitor's attention to the collection of arms and antiquities under his charge. It will here suffice to say that they are chiefly Sir Guy's eating and fighting gear: his porridge-pot (that will hold a dozen men), made of bell-metal, whose sonorous properties the porter will, by a curious manœuvre with Guy's cooking-fork, display; and also his sword, breastplate, and some other articles, from which the said porter informs you it is calculated that the Champion must have been eight feet and a half high or thereabouts, and proportionably broad. The porter is well convinced of the personality of Sir Guy, and it would be a pity if the guardian of the Knight's harness should be a traitor to him. Learned antiquaries have very carefully examined the armour and weapons, and they are quite satisfied that they could not be of so ancient a date by some centuries. But as the old porter says, "learned men arn't always right," and so each visitor may follow either authority as his tastes may lead him.

The town of Warwick is placed on a gentle hill, a little apart from the Avon, the castle

standing between them. It is a clean, pleasant town, and very ancient, tracing its pedigree *almost* to the Romans. Its history is not remarkably interesting, and may remain untold here. Although Warwick is an old town, it has about it not many ancient buildings. In 1694 more than half of it was destroyed by fire, and of course many of them then perished. Still there are some left: and of these the ecclesiastical edifices claim our first attention, of which St. Mary's church is the most important and the most prominent. It stands in nearly the centre of the town, and its lofty tower is a landmark for miles. The church is large, with transepts, nave, chancel, and chapel. It was finished in 1394, the cost of its erection having been borne by the Earls of Warwick: until the dissolution of Henry VIII. it was collegiate. The present church is a barbarous admixture of styles, a large portion of the original edifice having been destroyed in the great fire of 1694. The tower, which is one hundred and forty-two feet high to the top of the pinnacles, the nave and transepts, were then rebuilt. The chancel and the Beauchamp (or Mary) chapel escaped with much less damage than the other parts of the church; and although they suffered somewhat from the fire, and more from the repairs, they may be considered as ancient. The choir has a very beautiful stone groined ceiling, and is very fine in its effect: and the chancel well deserves Rickman's commendation: "it is an uncommonly beautiful specimen of perpendicular work; and the east front is remarkably fine—simple in its arrangements, yet rich from the elegance of its parts." But the glory of the place is the Beauchamp chapel, which it would be difficult

to overpraise. It was erected, as has been mentioned, in accordance with the will of Richard Beauchamp by his executors. Beauchamp died in 1439, but the chapel was not commenced till 1443, nor finished till 1464. The body of the earl was placed in a stone coffin, and remained near the tomb of his father till his own was ready to receive him in 1460.

This chapel is small, but so beautifully proportioned, and so exquisite in its details, as to delight all who visit it. It is arched and panelled, and has a small aisle on the north side. Beauchamp's tomb occupies the centre of the chapel, and there are several others of later date, but they, although some of them fine in themselves, rather detract from the unity of effect the chapel would otherwise possess. Beauchamp's is an altar tomb of marble, upon which is laid the statue of the earl in plated armour. It is somewhat larger than life, of gilt brass, and in perfect preservation. A hearse of gilt hoops is placed over it, a great many small figures are about the tomb, and it is literally powdered with bears and staffs, one or other of the insignia being inserted between every three or four words of the long inscriptions, as well as everywhere else that a place could be found for them. About the middle of the seventeenth century the floor of the chapel fell in, and the coffin of the earl being thereby broken, his body was exposed; at first it appeared little decayed, but after a short time it mouldered away. The ladies of Warwick had rings and other ornaments made of his hair: it is not said that they had bracelets and necklaces made of his bones, so that they may yet remain.

Dugdale has preserved some most interesting

records of the construction of this chapel; from which it appears to have been begun in 1443, and completed in 1464, at a cost of 248*l.* 4*s.* 7*d.* A sum probably equivalent to nearly twenty times as much at the present day; the price of an ox, as he mentions, being then 13*s.* 4*d.*, and that of a quarter of bread-corn 3*s.* 4*d.* The artists employed appear to have been nearly all Englishmen. Of those engaged in constructing the monument, one only was a foreigner, Bartholomew Lambespring, a Dutchman, who, with William Austen, made the figures: all the artists were resident in London. The figures which Lambespring made were, however, only the secondary ones; Austen was the principal artist. The agreement with Austen for the figure of the earl is as follows:—"Will. Austen, citizen and founder of London, XI. Feb. 28. H. 6, doth covenant to cast and make an Image of a man armed, of fine latten (brass) garnished with certain ornaments, viz., with sword and dagger; with a garter, with a helm and crest under his head, and at his feet a bear musted (muzzled), and a griffin perfectly made of the finest latten, according to patterns; all of which to be brought to Warwick and laid on the tomb at the peril of the said Austen; the Executors paying for the image, perfectly made and laid, and all the ornaments in good order, besides the cost of the said workmen to Warwick, and working there to lay the image, and besides the cost of the carriages, all which are to be borne by the said Executors, in total £40." There is also another covenant made with him two years afterwards, "to cast, work, and perfectly to make of the finest latten to be gilded that may be found, XIV.

images embossed, of lords and ladies in divers vestures, called weepers, to stand in housings made about the tomb, those images to be made in breadth, length, and thickness like unto XIV. patterns made of timber. Also he shall make XVIII. less images of angels, to stand in other housings, as shall be appointed by patterns, whereof IX. after one side and IX. after another. Also he must make an hearse to stand on the tomb according to a pattern; the stuff and workmanship to the repairing to be at the charge of the said Will. Austen. And the Executors shall pay for every image that shall lie on the tomb, of the weepers so made in latten, xiii*s.* iv*d.* And for every image of angels so made v*s.* And for every pound of latten that shall be in the hearse x*d.* And shall pay and bear the costs of the said Will. Austen for setting the said images and hearse." The total cost of the monument was 178*l.* It appears by no means clear from the mention made in the covenant of the "models of timber," whether Austen was the designer of the figures as well as the caster. It is most probable, however, he was both, as we know the early founders and sculptors in metal usually were: the artist being seldom in early times dissociated from the workman. Be it as it may, he is the only claimant for this figure, which is, in England at least, unequalled by any other of that age; and many good judges, Flaxman among others, have thought it not surpassed by the productions of any of his more famous Italian contemporaries. Besides its high merit as a work of art, it is considered to afford the finest example of the armour of that period. It may be remarked that "John Prudde of Westminster, glazier and

painter on glass," who was to prepare and set up the chapel windows, " in the finest wise, of the best, clearest, and strongest glass of beyond the sea, and no glass of England, and of the finest colours," was, in like manner, with Austen, to cause all the paintings to be done " according to patterns on paper to be delivered by the executors."

There are several other monuments in this chapel, and some of them of interest. One is to the Earl of Leicester, the favourite of Elizabeth; this is a very splendid monument, but inferior to Beauchamp's; it is also an altar-tomb with a recumbent statue on the top. A memorial to his wife the Countess of Essex is just by; and also a mural monument to his son, " the noble Impe Robert of Dudley, Baron Denbigh," as the inscription has it. Fuller says, " women are most delighted with the statue of the infant baron," and so they remained despite of all changing fashions, by which they are slanderously reported to be so much affected. Another fine altar-tomb and statue is that of Ambrose Dudley, brother of the Earl of Leicester. All these, as well as the chapel, are largely decked with the famous crest,

" The rampant bear chain'd to the ragged staff."

In the church is a handsome marble monument to the ancestor of the present Earl of Warwick. It has no statue, but around its sides an inscription of the noblest kind:—" Fulke Greville, Servant to Queen Elizabeth, Counciller to King James, Friend to Sir Philip Sydney." He was also the friend of lesser men:—" His merits to me ward," says Stow, " I do acknowledge, in setting this

hand free from the daily employments of a manuel trade, and giving it full liberty thus to express the inclinations of my mind, himself being the procurer of my present estate." A more elaborate account of St. Mary's church than has yet been published is understood to be in preparation by the Warwick Archæological Society, and will no doubt, from the abundance of the materials, be of much value.

There are some curious gate-houses in the town, the upper part of one of which is now used as a school-room; it formerly served as a church. Another old building originally belonged to the United Brethren of the Guilds of the Blessed Virgin and of St. George the Martyr. At the dissolution of all such religious establishments, in the reign of Henry, it was first given to Sir Nicholas l'Estrange, and afterwards became the property of the Dudley family. Queen Elizabeth's Earl of Leicester, from piety or ostentation, converted it into an hospital for twelve impotent or infirm men, to be selected from Warwick, Stratford, and one or two other towns, preference being given to soldiers, and there was to be also a master, who was to act as chaplain. The endowment has so greatly increased in value, that it has been found sufficient to support twenty-two brethren with salaries of 80*l.* per annum, and to raise the master's salary to 400*l.* per annum. The building has been so enlarged and altered as to retain but little of its original appearance.* The other buildings are of the kind usually seen in a

* There are a few old half-timber houses of elaborate construction that must not be overlooked in rambling through the streets.

county-town: there is a market-house, a town-hall, with a county-gaol adjoining to it, and a bridewell opposite; large inns; and a grammar-school.

The stranger will of course visit Leamington, about a mile and a half on the other side of the Avon. It is an entire contrast to Warwick, which, with its castle and church, with its gorgeous monuments, and its old houses, has quite the air of an ancient town; while Leamington, with its pump-rooms and baths, its long streets of fresh smart lodging-houses, its assembly-rooms and Jullien concerts, is as thoroughly modern.

CHAPTER IX.

DEER-STEALING.

The whole course of the Avon through Warwick Park, somewhat more than two miles, is exceedingly beautiful. The park is plentifully wooded, and broken into dell and upland; art has been called in to impart a more cultivated air to the wild graces of nature, and her aid has been judiciously afforded. Features lovely in themselves have been adorned and embellished, but not rendered formal, nor has their original character been refined away. From near the end of the park, just beyond the large lake that has been formed on the left of the river, a fine view is obtained of the grounds and distant castle.

The scenery is rich and diversified all about this part of the county, and the Avon winds through some of the choicest of it. Barford is the first village by which the river flows after it quits Warwick Park. Shortly before reaching it, the stream is broken by an islet or two, and a mill is worked by it, forming in combination a pleasing picture. Barford is a long and somewhat tedious village, without anything of any kind worth looking at twice. It may be avoided altogether by taking the road through Sherbourne, which is more agreeable in itself, leads past pleasanter places, and is more convenient for the river. Past Barford, on the same side, there is a very pretty village, called Wasperton, where the Avon is joined

by Thelesford brook, and thereabout the way will be found pleasant enough. Still the other is far the best, and by that our course shall be taken. But the river cannot be followed very closely without some inconvenience, as it runs for the most part through private grounds, and probably the visitor will be content with the road, which is not far from its side. It may, however, be followed by one who is willing to pursue it at the cost of a little additional trouble and time; its windings are very considerable, and the hedges and ditches such as do credit to a first-rate hunting county. After passing Sherbourne House, in the beautiful grounds attached to which stands the little church of Sherbourne, the river is joined by a brook that comes from the neighbourhood of Snitterfield, notorious for its fortnight-long wakes. From Barford bridge to Fulbrooke, the river runs between well-wooded and picturesque banks, and is even romantic in its character, especially about Hampton Wood, where it takes a long sweep round the base of a goodly hill. The Fulbrookes are now places of no consequence. A castle formerly stood by Lower Fulbrooke, but it was destroyed and its grounds disparked on the attainder of its owner, John Dudley, in 1553. Fulbrooke Park was granted by Queen Mary to Sir Henry Englefield; after her death it was resumed by the crown; and finally it was purchased by a descendant of Sir Thomas Lucy.

This name at once reminds us of Shakspere, and indeed we are now arrived at localities closely associated with his name and fame. Here, a short way from our river, between it and the road, and just by Copdock hill, the wanderer will see a little rude barn covered with thatch; this is called the "Deer barn," and is, according to the tradition

Fulbrooke Deer Barn.

(how trustworthy a one we shall quickly see), the place in which Shakspere concealed the venison he stole from Fulbrooke Park. This story of the deer-stealing is a singular one, and may be true; it was at any rate believed at a comparatively early period. That which gives to it a local habitation in Fulbrooke Park is more recent; while the connecting it with this barn appears to have Mr. Samuel Ireland for its original authority—and what that is worth those who have followed him in anything best know. It is pleasant to see how readily a firm-looking fiction may break down. "A word or two," says Mr. Knight, "disposes of this part of the tradition: Fulbrooke Park did not come into the possession of the Lucy family till the grandson of Sir Thomas purchased it in the reign of James I." Plainly Shakspere could not steal

Sir Thomas Lucy's deer from this park, wherever else he might have taken it from. But although this affair is thus deracinated from Fulbrooke Park, it may as well be altogether got rid of before we go any further.

By far the best examination of the whole story is that given by Mr. Knight: as we shall have occasion to speak again of other traditions relating to our poet, it may be useful to watch the thorough dissection of one.*

The story of the deer-stealing, the prosecution, the "bitter ballad," and the consequent flight to London to escape the ire of the knight, as first told by Rowe, need not be repeated here.

"The good old gossip, Aubrey, is wholly silent about the deer-stealing and the flight to London, merely saying, 'This William, being naturally inclined to poetry and acting, came to London, I guess, about eighteen.' But there were other antiquarian gossips of Aubrey's age, who have left us their testimony upon this subject. The Rev. William Fulman, a Fellow of Corpus Christi College, Oxford, who died in 1688, bequeathed his papers to the Rev. Richard Davies, of Sandford, Oxfordshire; and on the death of Mr. Davies in 1707, these papers were deposited in the library of Corpus Christi. Fulman appears to have made some collections for the biography of our English poets, and under the name of Shakspere he gives the dates of his birth and death. But Davies, who

* In making such large extracts from Mr. Knight's 'Shakspere,' it is proper to remark that I do so by his permission. In this instance he has investigated the subject much more rigorously than I could be supposed to have done; and even had I imagined I could have given as clear and full an account of it, there would have been little use in re-writing what is already written so satisfactorily.

added notes to his friend's MSS., affords us the following piece of information: 'He was much given to all unluckiness, in stealing venison and rabbits, particularly from Sir Lucy, who had him oft whipped, and sometimes imprisoned, and at last made him fly his native country, to his great advancement. But his revenge was so great, that he is his Justice Clodpate, and calls him a great man, and that, in allusion to his name, bore three louses rampant for his arms.' The accuracy of this chronicler, as to events supposed to have happened a hundred years before he wrote, may be inferred from his correctness in what was accessible to him. Justice Clodpate is a new character; and the three louses rampant have diminished strangely from the 'dozen white luces' of Master Slender. In Mr. Davies's account we have mention of the ballad, through which, according to Rowe, the young poet revenged his 'ill-usage.' But Capell, the editor of Shakspere, found a new testimony to that fact: 'The writer of his Life, the first modern [Rowe], speaks of a lost ballad, which added fuel, he says, to the knight's before-conceived anger, and 'redoubled the prosecution;' and calls the ballad 'the first essay of Shakspere's poetry:' one stanza of it, which has the appearance of genuine, was put into the editor's hands many years ago, by an ingenious gentleman (grandson of its preserver), with this account of the way in which it descended to him: Mr. Thomas Jones, who dwelt at Tarbeck, a village in Worcestershire, a few miles from Stratford-on-Avon, and died in the year 1703, aged upwards of ninety, remembered to have heard from several old people at Stratford the story of Shakspere's robbing Sir Thomas Lucy's park, and their account of it agreed with Mr. Rowe's, with this

addition—that the ballad written against Sir Thomas by Shakspere was stuck upon his park-gate, which exasperated the knight to apply to a lawyer at Warwick to proceed against him. Mr. Jones had put down in writing the first stanza of the ballad, which was all he remembered of it, and Mr. Thomas Wilkes (my grandfather) transmitted it to my father by memory, who also took it in writing' (Notes and various Readings to Shakspere, Part III. p. 75). This, then, is the entire evidence as to the deer-stealing transaction. According to Rowe, the young Shakspere was engaged more than once in robbing a park, for which he was prosecuted by Sir Thomas Lucy; he made a ballad upon his prosecutor, and then, being more severely pursued, fled to London. According to Davies, he was much given to all unluckiness in stealing venison and rabbits, for which he was often whipped, sometimes imprisoned, and at last forced to fly the country. According to Jones the tradition was correct as to robbing the park; and the obnoxious ballad being stuck upon the park-gate, a lawyer of Warwick was authorised to prosecute the offender. The tradition is thus full of contradictions upon the face of it. It necessarily would be so, for each of the witnesses speaks of circumstances that must have happened a hundred years before his time. We must examine the credibility of the tradition therefore by inquiring what was the state of the law as to the offence for which William Shakspere is said to have been prosecuted; what was the state of public opinion as to the offence; and what was the position of Sir Thomas Lucy as regarded his immediate neighbours.

"The law in operation at the period in question was the 5th of Elizabeth, chap. 21. The ancient

forest-laws had regard only to the possessions of the crown; and, therefore, in the 32nd of Henry VIII., an Act was passed for the protection of 'every inheritor and possessor of manors, land, and tenement,' which made the killing of deer, and the taking of rabbits and hawks, felony. This Act was repealed in the 1st of Edward VI.; but it was quickly re-enacted in the 3rd and 4th of Edward VI. (1549 and 1550), it being alleged that unlawful hunting prevailed to such an extent throughout the realm, in the royal and private parks, that in one of the king's parks, within a few miles of London, five hundred deer were slain in one day. For the due punishment of such offences the taking of deer was again made felony. But the Act was again repealed in the 1st of Mary. In the 5th of Elizabeth it was attempted in parliament once more to make the offence a capital felony. But this was successfully resisted; and it was enacted, that if any person, by night or by day, 'wrongfully or unlawfully break or enter into any park empaled, or any other several ground closed with wall, pale, or hedge, and used for the keeping, breeding, and cherishing of deer, and so wrongfully hunt, drive, or chase out, or take, kill, or slay any deer within any such empaled park, or closed ground with wall, pale, or other enclosure, and used for deer, as is aforesaid,' he shall suffer three months' imprisonment, pay treble damages to the party offended, and find sureties for seven years' good behaviour. But there is a clause in this Act (1562-3) which renders it doubtful whether the penalties for taking deer could be applied twenty years after the passing of the Act, in the case of Sir Thomas Lucy. 'Provided always, that this Act, or any thing contained therein, ex-

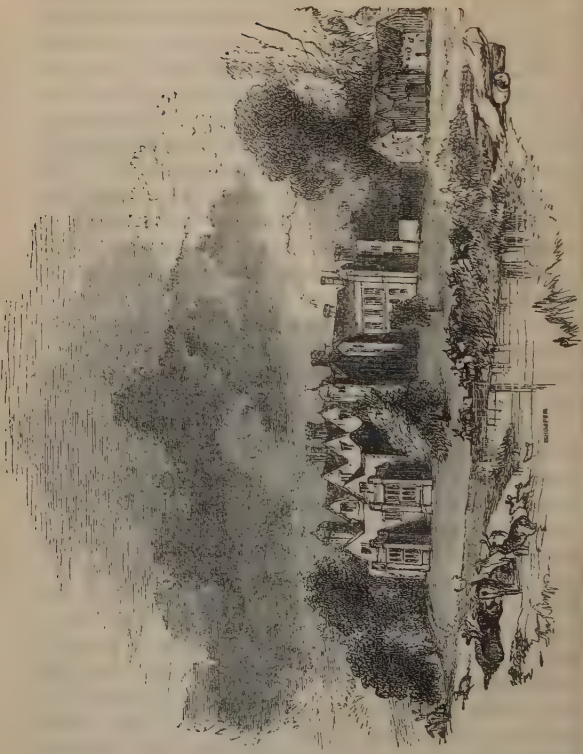
tend not to any park or enclosed ground hereafter to be made and used for deer, without the grant or license of our Sovereign Lady the Queen, her heirs, successors, or progenitors.' At the date of this statute Charlcote, it is said, was not a deer-park, was not an enclosed ground royally licensed. For the space of forty-two years after the passing of this Act of Elizabeth there was no remedy for deer-stealing (except by action for trespass) in grounds not enclosed at the passing of that Act. The statute of the 3rd James I. recites that for offences within such grounds there is no remedy provided by the Act of Elizabeth, or by any other Act. It appears to us, however, that Malone puts the case against the tradition too strongly, when he maintains that Charlcote was not a licensed park in 1562, and that, therefore, its venison continued to be unprotected till the statute of James. The Act of Elizabeth clearly contemplates any 'several ground' 'closed with wall, pale, or hedge, and used for the keeping of deer;' and as Sir Thomas built the mansion at Charlcote in 1558, it may reasonably be supposed that at the date of the statute the domain of Charlcote was closed with wall, pale, or hedge. . . . . We have seen, then, that for ten years previous to the passing of the Act of Elizabeth for the preservation of deer, there had been no laws in force except the old forest-laws, which applied not to private property. The statute of Elizabeth makes the bird-nesting boy, who climbs up to the hawk's eyrie, as liable to punishment as the deer-stealer. The taking of rabbits, as well as deer, was felony by the statutes of Henry VIII. and Edward VI.; but from the time of Henry VIII. to James I. there was no protection for rabbits, they were *feræ naturæ*. Our

unhappy poet, therefore, could not be held to steal rabbits, however fond he might be of hunting them; and certainly it would have been legally unsafe to have whipped him for such a disposition. Pheasants and partridges were free for men of all conditions to shoot with gun or cross-bow, or capture with hawk. There was no restriction against taking hares, except a statute of Henry VIII., which, for the protection of hunting, forbade tracking them in the snow. With this general right of sport it is scarcely to be expected that the statute against the taking of deer should be very strictly observed by the bold yeomanry of the days of Elizabeth, or that the offence of a young man should have been visited with such severe prosecution as should have compelled him to fly the country. The penalty for the offence was a defined one. The short imprisonment might have been painful for a youth to bear, but it would not have been held disgraceful. All the writers of the Elizabethan period speak of killing a deer with a sort of jovial sympathy, worthy the descendants of Robin Hood. 'I'll have a buck till I die; I'll slay a doe while I live,' is the maxim of the host in 'The Merry Devil of Edmonton;' and even Sir John the priest reproves him not: he joins in the fun. With this loose state of public opinion, then, upon the subject of venison, is it likely that Sir Thomas Lucy would have pursued for such an offence the eldest son of an alderman of Stratford with any extraordinary severity? The knight was nearly the most important person residing in the immediate neighbourhood of Stratford. In 1578 he had been high sheriff. At the period when the deer-stealing may be supposed to have taken place he was seeking to be member for the county of

Warwick, for which he was returned in 1584. He was in the habit of friendly intercourse with the residents of Stratford; for, in 1583, he was chosen as an arbitrator in a matter of dispute by Hamnet Sadler the friend of John Shakspere, and of his son. All these considerations tend, we think, to show that the improbable deer-stealing tradition is based, like many other stories connected with Shakspere, on that vulgar love of the marvellous which is not satisfied with the wonder which a being eminently endowed himself presents, without seeking a contrast of profligacy, or meanness, or ignorance in his early condition, amongst the tales of a rude generation who came after him, and, hearing of his fame, endeavoured to bring him as near as might be to themselves."—('William Shakspere: a Biography,' pp. 205-209.)

So much for that story. Be its truth ever so little or none, it is too firmly grafted into our literature to be dissevered from it. Allusions to it occur everywhere, and often bold deductions have been drawn from it, and many are the choice illustrations it has supplied. How rich is its suggestiveness to a powerful imagination may be seen in the exquisite fiction of Walter Landor. The reader may choose whether he will receive the story in a modified form, or give it up altogether without much care, for neither point seems determinable, only it is quite certain that the old coarse version of it is indefensible. As for the ballad, he may believe it to be Shakspere's who can; but he who has read Shakspere, and can receive it as his, must have a digestive faculty far stronger than an ostrich's.

Leaving Fulbrooke, a short walk beside our stream brings us to Hampton Lucy (or Bishop's Hampton, as it used to be called), a village such as it is a



joy to light upon, so quiet, so old-fashioned, so homely, yet so comfortable-looking in its homeliness. The church is new, but of superior attractions, and a neat school-house stands beside it. Several large trees are about it, and on the village green. The river here is wide, and with the village has a cheerful look. But we hardly quit Hampton when all is as still and lonely as though all home of man were far removed. The stream glides quietly along, scarcely a ripple stirring its surface but when a heavy carp rises at some luckless fly, or a swallow dips his wing into it; and thick trees on every side close in the prospect.

Charlcote is on the opposite side of the river to Hampton Lucy, and it will be necessary for the pedestrian to cross the bridge at the latter place: a lane will lead him direct to the house. Charlcote House stands close to the river, in a small but richly-wooded park. A broad avenue of fine lime-trees leads to the old-fashioned gateway of the mansion. Sir Thomas Lucy, as we have seen, built his mansion in 1558, and it retains all the characteristics of that period. It is a large, low, red brick edifice, full of projections, which checker it with a bold play of light and shadow, peaked gables, bays, and square-headed windows, and stacks of chimneys of twisted and other quaint shapes. So perfect is it, that it hardly requires the remembrance of Shakspere to carry the visitant at once back to the golden days of good Queen Bess. It is a place you linger about, half fearing to enter lest the charm should be broken. If Shakspere was not here as a culprit, he must have been often here as a visitor, have strolled about the park, and looked with similar feelings of delight to those we now

Charlcote House, from the Park

feel, on it and on the river. To us the chief charm arises from its connection with those days; to us it is ancient, but he saw it when it was but of a few years' date; and whatever were the wild and glowing thoughts that passed through his mind as he lay stretched—

> "Under an oak, whose antique root peeps out
> Upon the brook that brawls along this wood,"

it could scarcely have entered into his imagination that one day this place would be visited because his name had become connected with it.

The interior of the mansion is preserved with the same care and good taste as the exterior: the alterations and additions that had become necessary have been made with a strict regard to the original, and the result is all that could be desired by the straitest archæologist. The noble hall is pointed out as the place in which Shakspere was brought before Sir Thomas Lucy to answer for his misdemeanors. Whatever may have been the cause, it is certain that Shakspere did have some grudge against Sir Thomas, and point against him almost the only personal satire that escaped from his pen; but it is most probable it arose from other and much later reasons. Another and very narrow avenue leads from the great gateway to the parish church, which stands just at the extremity of the park by the road. And along this avenue the stranger should be sure to walk. The little sober, grey, old pile, is quite the ideal of a simple rural village church. It is, too, quite untouched, and thoroughly unsophisticated. As you look at it from the road, nestling so happily among the noble trees whose fresh deep green shade and dense

foliage make it look greyer and older than it is, and with the grave-stones scattered about the churchyard, it seems the very emblem of peace. Among all the beautiful and impressive sights that our dear Old England can show us, none is more beautiful, more soothing, more elevating than one of her quiet village churches. The loveliest spot is rendered lovelier by it, the grandest is sanctified.

The interior of Charlcote Church contains the monuments of Sir Thomas Lucy and of his wife; and if faith may be placed in epitaphs, he was anything but what tradition would represent him. But both are doubtful witnesses, and were they to coincide they would hardly be held sufficient by a rigorous judge to save a suspected person. The epitaph on Sir Thomas's wife is really an excellent sketch of a good wife, "set down by him that best did know" whether she were one—Thomas Lucy. There is a plain stone in the churchyard with an inscription to another couple (John Gibbs, aged 81; and his wife, 55), who seem to have been more content with each other than with the world; it is set down in what the clerk would call such uncommon metre, that it is perhaps worth copying:—

> "Farewell, proud, vain, false, treacherous world, we have seen enough of thee;
> We value not what thou canst say of we."

Perchance, if Sir Thomas could have known all that the wicked world would say of him, he would have jotted down the sentiment, if he had couched it in other words—though they would have done well enough to run in tether with "Shakspere's ballad."

CHAPTER X.

THE BIRTH-PLACE OF SHAKSPERE.

We will not return again to our stream yet, but proceed at once to Stratford, where we shall abide awhile, and from whence we can at our leisure follow the poet's footsteps along his own Avon. The distance from Charlcote to Stratford is about four miles and a half by the road; by the river-side, some two miles farther.

Wherever he goes, unquestionably the first place the traveller looks after is his Inn—supposing, of course, that he be turned five-and-twenty and have a wife; for till then, travellers, especially such as have a touch of the romantic, do many strange things to their own discomfort, the horror of their seniors in the craft, and the amazement as well as amusement of all innkeeper's men. But for the master traveller, till he is satisfied in respect to his inn, faint and feeble are the attractions of the loveliest scenes, dim the brightest associations, unthought-of the most glorious recollections:—what to him are the lakes and the mountains,—the birth-places of genius,—the fields that have been moistened with the life-blood of the patriot, or the glorious monuments of man's god-like mind—if he have not had his dinner, and knows not where he shall sleep? Johnson said a toothache would speedily bring to the earth the loftiest flight of the

philosopher—and certainly the pain connected with the want of an inn would prevent him attempting a flight. There is no use in denying it—a good comfortable inn *is* the desideratum of every traveller towards the end of the day.

Now Stratford is very well provided with inns—better than most places of its size; and though they are of various standing and attractions, so that the visitant may choose among them according to his taste, or the depth of his pocket, yet are they all—to speak in good plain guide-book style—held in repute for the quality of their accommodation and the moderation of their charges. Each of them, however, boasts of something all its own; and on so important a matter it may be well to add a word. There is first the White Lion, in Henley-street, near Shakspere's house, which was the inn the Jubilee magnates made their head-quarters;—here, you will be reminded, it was that Dr. Greville and Mr. Wildgoose, in that not unclever, though now everywhere-but-at-Stratford-forgotten novel, 'The Spiritual Quixote,' are made to stop in their way from Gloucester to Warwickshire. The landlord there spoken of, Sam. Welchman, was the son of Dr. Welchman, author of the 'Illustrations of the Thirty-nine Articles.' Sam was not himself overburdened with learning, but he was conscious of the honour reflected on him by that of his father, and he used to take care that his guests should not be ignorant of it. "Gentlemen," he used to say, as soon as he became ever so slightly familiar with them, "I dare say you have heard of my father, gentlemen—a very great man—he made the Thirty-nine Articles." Another inn, not unknown to fame, is the Red Horse of Wash-

House in Henley Street.

ington Irving, where they show his room, his hand-writing, and some other things of his—whereof more hereafter. Then adjoining the town-hall there is the Shakspere, which, besides the attraction of its name for all, has an excellent kitchen for the man of taste, and for the ardent Shaksperian a relic of *the* mulberry-tree, and, on its lawn, the font in which the bard was baptized. Opposite to the site of New-place is the Falcon, which tradition assigns as originally the residence of Shakspere's friend Julius Shaw, but there is better reason to believe that his house was a few doors from New-place, on the same side of the way, between it and the Shakspere Hotel. The Falcon is, however, a very old house, and may be as old as Shakspere's time: the present front is quite recent. It too has its relics. The wainscoting of the large room in which the Shakspere Club holds its meetings, was brought from New-place when it was pulled down, and affixed where it now remains. The present landlord has a branch of the mulberry-tree, and some other matters. Having fixed on an inn, there can be no question whither next the pilgrim will bend his footsteps.

THE IMMORTAL SHAKSPEARE WAS BORN IN THIS HOUSE,

is the inscription on a rudely painted sign-board, fixed over what looks like a very miserable butcher's shop in Henley-street. All the most minute details connected with the life of Shakspere have been so canvassed within the last few years, that it may perhaps be necessary to say that the belief that he was born in this house remains undisturbed. Tradition has constantly affirmed this to be his birth-

place, and in a matter of this kind tradition is much more trustworthy than when she tattles of the actions or sayings of eminent men. Nor is her testimony unsupported. Proper official documents exist, which prove that the poet's father, John Shakspere, did, in 1555, nine years before William Shakspere's birth, purchase a house and appurtenances situated in Henley-street; and it is equally well authenticated that the son owned this very house till his death. John Shakspere had, at the same time, other property in Stratford, and some a little way out of it, but we may fairly receive the tradition which makes this his dwelling-place in April, 1564. Whatever he may have read about the house, or however familiar he may be with the engravings of it, he who looks upon it for the first time will experience a feeling of surprise and disappointment at its extreme humbleness. Could a substantial yeoman, as John Shakspere appears to have been, have dwelt in such a place? he will ask himself, and it will require an effort to believe in the affirmative. But the dwellings of wealthy yeomen were very different then to those of a similar class now; besides which, this house has undergone strange vicissitudes since he occupied it. Then, and long afterwards, we know that it had extensive orchards and gardens attached to it—now it is divided into three tenements, and its grounds are severed from it and built upon, or otherwise occupied. But its history will best enable us to understand its mutations, and that may be told in a very brief space. From John Shakspere it descended to his eldest son, the poet, who bequeathed it, now described as two houses, to his eldest daughter Susannah, reserving to his sister

House in Henley Street, as formerly.

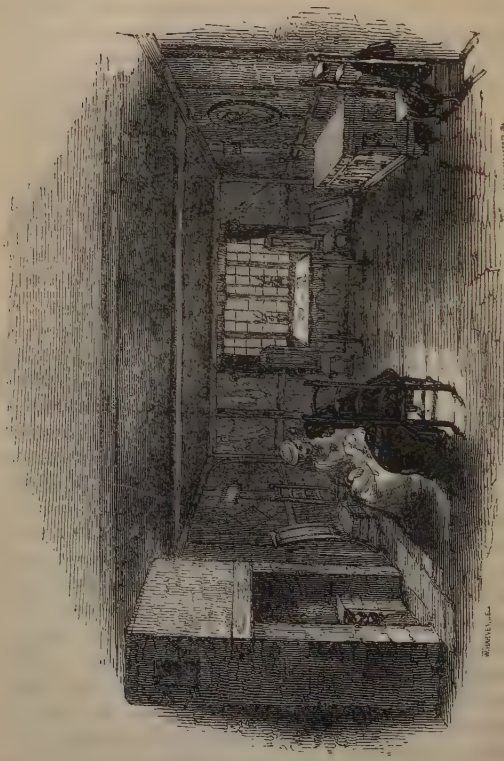
Joan (who was married to a William Hart) for her natural life the house she then dwelt in. Her house was no doubt that now known as Shakspere's house, with the adjoining tenement; and here she probably resided till her death, in 1646. The other portion was known as the Maidenhead Inn in 1642. At the death of Joanna Hart, the whole of the estate of course reverted to Shakspere's daughter Susannah Hall, and when she died, not long afterwards, it passed to her daughter Lady Barnard. She, at her demise, left both houses to Thomas and George Hart, the grandsons of Joan Hart. It continued in the possession of their descendants till the beginning of the present century. But they had been gradually growing poorer; the Maidenhead Inn had become a low public-house, and was called the Swan; the other house had been divided into two; and the lower part of that now pointed out as the poet's birth-place, was converted into a butcher's shop; the gardens and orchards were sold; and finally, in 1806, the houses themselves were disposed of to "Mr. Thomas Court, whose widow now has the honour to open it to public visitation," as the New Guide very appropriately winds up the matter.

But we must follow its history a little further. Mr. Thomas Court, himself the host of the little inn, which he restored in part to its original sign, calling it the 'Swan and Maidenhead,' was naturally anxious to render that as attractive as possible; accordingly he gave to it a new very red brick front, and thereby for ever destroyed everything like the original appearance of the building. When the lower part of the central tenement was made to serve for a butcher's shop, its window was

taken away altogether, and has not been replaced. The old window in the upper story was also removed, and a larger and most ill favoured one substituted for it. The butcher's trade continued to be carried on till within a very few years, a son of Mr. Court succeeding the Harts in that calling, and though he and his trade are now gone, the shop retains all the signs of its late employment. Add to all that has been said of the place, that it is a timber house, the parts between the large framework being, as in all such houses, rough-cast—that it has stood the wear of three centuries, that now the rough-cast is covered with a coarsely applied whitewash, while the beams are as coarsely covered with black—and it will not be difficult to understand that it must be seen to a great disadvantage as compared with its original appearance. Alterations of all kinds have been made in it, and none without injuring it. And wretched as is the look of the exterior, the interior is not much better. The lower room still has the fittings of a butcher's shop of the humblest order. Hooks hang from the ceiling, and the stone floor shows signs of rough treatment in its broken flags. The kitchen is a little better. It has a large fire-place with one of those old-fashioned corners, where we may fancy the boy would listen to the fine old ballads, of which his mother would have a goodly store.

But it is the room above that is *the* room, and thither we will ascend. This room—the room in which tradition is constant that Shakspere was born—would now be thought rude even in a cottage. It is long and narrow, with a low ceiling supported by beams, but the original ceiling appears to have been covered; the walls are not as

they were originally—for the curious old window, a wide but shallow one, and placed near the ceiling, is substituted one of the commonest and ugliest form—the fire-place is altered, and a modern grate inserted—and it is almost bare of furniture. It is not therefore easy at first to realize the feeling that this is indeed Shakspere's birth-place. The philosopher who has discoursed with such truth and poetry on hero-worship, might here have found a large illustration of it. Into this little humble room how many of the mighty of the earth have come as pilgrims! Run over their names on the walls and in the books, and think of the force of his genius who could thus attract the noble, the wise, and the beautiful. The whitewashed walls are coated again and again with names in pencil and in ink. Names fill every portion of walls, ceiling, staircase, and windows, from grand dukes to dustmen apparently. It is curious and interesting to examine them, but more so to turn over the leaves of the books. In them are names from all climes, and kindreds, and tongues; Russians, Germans, Indians, even Frenchmen—and that before the representation in Paris of Hamlet with the part of the *Ghost* left out by particular desire had enabled them to appreciate him;—natives of Van Diemen's Land and the Isle of Skye. But undoubtedly (after the English) Americans are beyond comparison the most numerous. They come in shoals of all kinds and from all the States. Slaveholders, emancipators, repudiators; from the South, North, Midland, and far-Western. And they are by far the most enthusiastic. But this is a subject will bear opening a little. Every contribution to the natural history of Enthusiasm,



Room in Henley Street.

however slight, is of service, and here are the results of Stratford experience.

When an American arrives at Stratford he is in an agony till he has secured a bed at the Red Horse. Washington Irving wrote a sentence which wears a very innocent appearance, but which has produced consequences—looking around him as he stretches himself before the fire in the little parlour of the Red Horse, he says:—"The arm-chair is his throne, the poker his sceptre, and the little parlour of some twelve feet square his undisputed empire." Now, excepting one had noticed the anti-republican train of thought, or rather phraseology, one would have let this pass by as a very prettily expressed sentence should. But somehow it has caught the fancy of his countrymen, and his empire must be their empire, his throne their throne, his sceptre their sceptre. And they are preserved for them. Mine host knows his trade; this Essay has half made his fortune, and he is grateful for it. The poker is degraded to no common uses. The legend, "Washington Irving's Sceptre," is engraved on it, and unless by special request only his countrymen wield it. Proud man is he who feels it in his grasp. He is, for the nonce, every inch a king. His frame expands, his eyes glitter, his cheek is flushed, and he thinks the President would look more dignified if he swayed a sceptre. He is convinced that Irving is a great man, and exclaims, "I am his countryman." He loses none of the exaltation of spirit while he remains at Stratford. Mrs. Court has great respect for Americans. She thinks their homage to the Bard very proper, and knows they are liberal to her. I rather guess she took me for a Yankee,

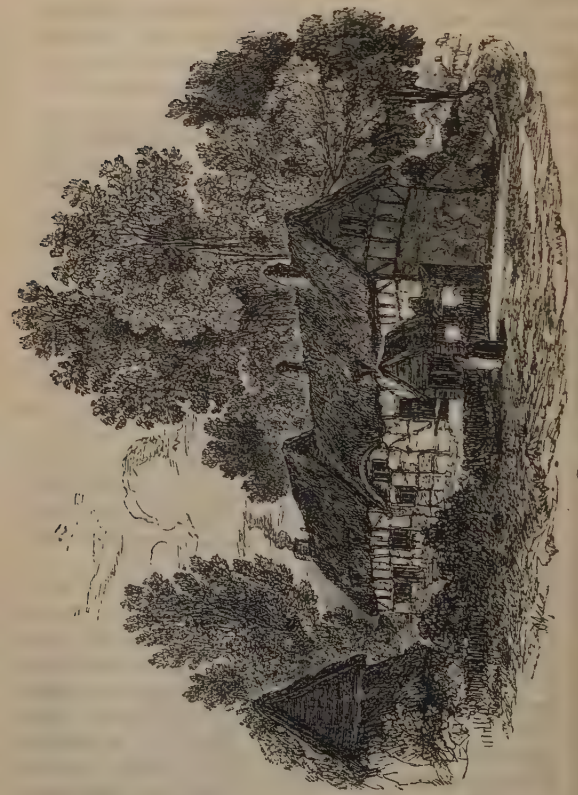
She showed me all their names in the books (and she turns to any American name with marvellous facility), and readily told me everything about them. "Bless you, sir, many and many's the time I have seen gentlemen from America kneel down just where you are standing, and kiss the boards over and over again, sir." Often they will not be content with that, but must have a bed brought, that they may sleep in the room in which Shakspere was born. They are eager after all relics; one offered the good dame sixteen guineas for a little wooden box made out of Shakspere's mulberry-tree. Nay, one of them—"What *do* you think some American gentlemen wanted me to do, sir? Why, sir, to take and pull the house all to pieces, and carry it over to New York, sir, and there set it up again and make a show of it; and they warranted me I should make a world of money by it too, sir; and then if I chose to sell the pieces, I might have almost anything I'd ask for them. But no, *that* I'd never do. What do *you* think of that, sir?"

The natives of other places are not so marked in the expression of their feelings. The sons of the Green Isle rank next; they spout the poet's verses vehemently, are excited by his birth-place, but far more by his grave; if they can kiss the monument their bliss is complete, and their feelings not to be restrained. Scotchmen are quieter—they don't kiss anything. "Nae, boot is this Shakspere's room? and whare's Sir Walter Scott's name on the wall and i' the buke?" These they eagerly carry their fingers over,—so eagerly that his name is nearly gone from the wall, rubbed out in excess of zeal,—only the tail of one of the s's is discern-

ible. In the book it is little plainer, for his warm-hearted countrymen point it out with such energy, while their enthusiasm, like Bob Acres' courage, is oozing out of their fingers' ends, that it has very much the appearance of having been steeped in oil.

English visitors think it a very little room for so great a poet to have been born in; and then they pace it, to determine how large it is. Some who are infected with a taste, suggest the propriety of "restoring" it; talk of oak timbering, propose to take up the floor, and have it turned and planed to make it smooth, and bring the joints together—would abolish the stove, and have a wide hearth and dogs, and put some furniture in the room of the Elizabethan style. Others are very particular about its being *really* the room, and one gentleman, to make assurance doubly sure, not content with the sign-board outside the house, "brought in his carriage the other day" another board, to be hung up in the recess in the room, to inform all who come to it, that "there Shakspere first saw the light," or something of the sort, with a little additional flourish.

It will not be imagined, I hope, that I am quizzing these folks, or doing anything that would imply that I thought strong feeling out of place here. That there is a goodly amount of affectation brought into this house there is evidence enough; but we may hope that there is at least an equal amount of honest feeling. After all, it matters little to us what others do, say, or think, so long as we are careful not to let ourselves affect what we feel not; we need not heed what form the outward expression of what we do feel may take,



Cottage at Rhotter.

simply aiming, if we aim at anything, to let there be neither concealment nor display. There is surely no need of either. The affectation of indifference is as hurtful to our own hearts, and no wiser than the affectation of sensibility. Perhaps it is the one we are now most in danger of sliding into. But if there be any such symptom, we should rid ourselves of it at once. We should so cherish the feelings that lead us to visit places such as these, that no scoffer should sneer them away. They are worthy of our regard. They belong not to our lower nature, but are a part of our holiest.

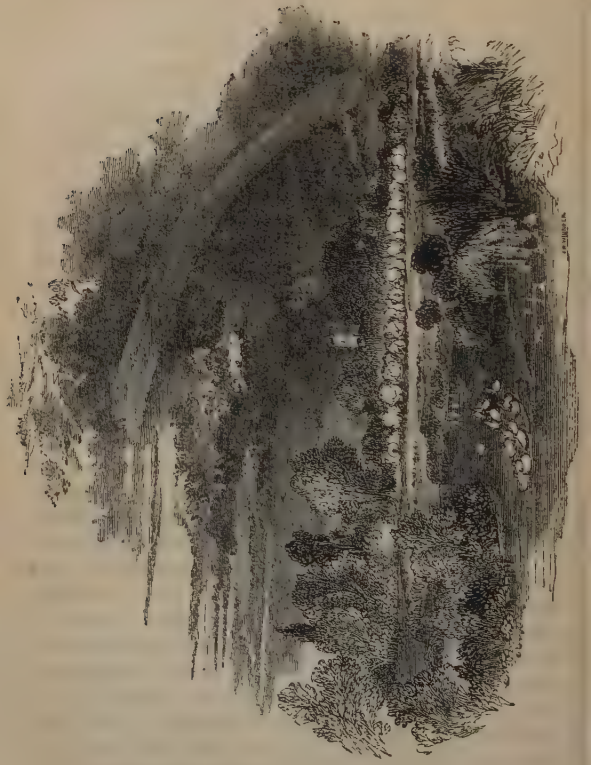
With some of the same feelings that we regard Shakspere's birth-place may we approach the dwelling of his early love, his wife, his children's mother, at Shottery. A few words will describe this humble place.—The cottage is not beautiful now—it has rather as poor an appearance as the house of the poet's parents in Henley Street, and the causes that have produced this change have been the same in each, and which need not be repeated. This house is also divided, and now forms two tenements. It is a long low building, formed, like most of the old houses in this neighbourhood, of a timber framework, with a thatched roof. There used to be some few matters shown here that had Shakspere's name appended to them; they had been considered as heir-looms, and had been long in the possession of the family. Some of them, however, Garrick induced the person who then held them to dispose of to him; and the last relic, an old oak chair, known as "Shakspere's courting chair," Mr. Samuel Ireland purchased and carried off; being moved thereto, he says, by his veneration for the poet. Nothing is left now

but a bedstead, rudely, but rather curiously carved, and which appears, probably enough, to be as old as the reign of Elizabeth. The parents of Ann Hathaway continued to reside here most likely as long as they lived, and their descendants retained possession of it till a recent period. The Hathaways are extinct now. The last of them died in this house several years ago; her granddaughter is the occupant of that half the building in which is the bedstead. The person who purchased this property proposed a few years back to pull the cottage down, but he was induced to forego his purpose: it will probably not escape another time.

CHAPTER XI.

THE POET'S WALKS.

AROUND Stratford there are several walks that a stranger will feel to be pleasurable in their character, but which to one used to associate them with Shakspere's daily life will assume a beauty and a companionable nature which no stranger can possibly perceive in them, or appreciate if pointed out. We may be sure there was many a spot which some slight circumstance in his early life, some pleasant association, or mere force of long acquaintance would render dear to our great poet—be loved in opening life, and cherished in maturity; and when he had in his later years withdrawn from the pleasure and strife of the great world to the seclusion and studious ease of his native place, would be prized with fuller and deeper affection. He who loves a country life, and knows with how strong attachment such unsought and unpraised nooks are remembered, and how often the recollection of them "makes a sunshine in the shadiest place," may perhaps, when he comes upon some secluded glade or quiet recess, be tempted to let his fancy picture it as one of the poet's cherished objects. But we may not now do that, we are to look at those places we left unvisited between Charlcote and Stratford; and this part of our river is by far the most beautiful in its whole course, except



the vale of Evesham. We will take a slight turn round, but delay nowhere till we reach the point where we quitted the Avon.

Let us proceed a little to the northward, and then turning eastward wind round to Hampton. The family mansion of the Cloptons, of whom Sir Hugh, it will be remembered, was the great benefactor to Stratford, lies somewhat more than a mile to the north of the town. The Cloptons have long been extinct, but Clopton House stands. In Shakspere's day it was a fine mansion, brick, as most of these mansions were, with those projecting gables that cause so rich and picturesque a play of light and answering shadow; its windows were not straight slits, all alike and all unmeaning, as modern taste requires, but various and all beautiful; bays and oriels there were pleasant to look at, and suggesting pleasant fancies of seats within them, and a book or fair maiden to converse with. Quaint and fanciful were its carved and twisted chimney-shafts, tall and manifold the peaked points of its roof —a mansion-house of the olden time. Shakspere, perhaps, often spent pleasant hours in it, often looked with delight on it as he strolled across these grounds.—It still stands. A few years ago it was entirely repaired and renovated. Nothing that consummate skill could devise has been neglected to disguise, disfigure, and utterly destroy the original character of the house. Were a dome to be placed over Westminster Abbey, and a Corinthian portico in front, and Ionic columns at the sides, and some Elizabethan shafts where chimneys are not, the alteration would not be more perfect than in this case, nor more graceful. It is a masterly work.

There are some pleasant walks beyond Clopton; there are the villages of Clopton, Bishopton, Ingon, and other places, but they must be left for the visitant to discover. Leaving Clopton House on our left, we may make our way across the very beautiful grounds of Welcombe. The house is gone. The park is full of glens of most romantic character, with hills equally fine in their way; altogether, it is a place for a poet richly to enjoy. Some of these hills and dells are the remains of an ancient encampment. Passing Hatton we turn down to our river, which we may rejoin by Hampton.

Rich beyond everything else to poetical minds have been the running streams. Rivers, perhaps, have made most poets. No genuine poet who has had occasion to mention them has done so without affection, without a social regard for them beyond what he appears to express for any other object in nature. I am not forgetting the field flowers, those dearest of Nature's lesser gifts, when I say this—there is a difference so great between them, that they cannot interfere with each other. But a river is the very inspirer of poetry itself, and ever has been. We know that the grand old Greeks, who never had any fable without a pregnant meaning, so fabled. And one who was not a Greek, but a manly northern self-dependent genius, has said—

> "The Muse, nae poet ever fand her,
> Till by himsel' he learned to wander
> Adown some trotting burn's meander,
> And na' think lang."

Which is condensing a whole book into four short lines. Now what Burns said is no doubt the very

plain prosaic truth, as well as a rich poetic one. The quiet lonely character of the place, the constant flow of the stream, the gentle succession of glen and hill, of clear space and shady covert, the "na' think lang," are just what mildly stimulate the open mind, and let in a full tide of teeming thoughts and pregnant imagery. We can have no doubt about Shakspere having "learned to wander" by himself here in very early life. The constant *bits* of river imagery and allusion that occur throughout his poetry, prove that it was a memory that had coiled itself around his inmost being. When he said—

> "I know a bank whereon the wild thyme blows,
> Where ox-lips and the nodding violet grows;

Old Town.

Quite over-canopied with lush woodbine,
With sweet musk-roses and with eglantine;"

was it likely this was merely an imaginary bank? that this so exquisite picture was not a reality? Shakspere was the true poet of Nature: a close observer of her every aspect; and not a minute detailer of her various objects merely, but seeing far into her inmost mysteries. Those "thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears," we may be sure he often felt, for the Wonderful that lies beyond the material elements seems often to have engaged his attention, and been dwelt on in prolonged musings; but he found the corrective for whatever of obscurity and mysticism might else have resulted from this in the active employments of life, which effectually prevented him "considering too curiously" of such things, and therefore it is that we find with all his subtle thought the sufficient counterpoise of full practical activity. But leaving these lofty matters, we will let this lovely spot recall to our attention the poet's river from the poet's self. And here a companion, who has explored this part of our stream thoroughly, will lend us his aid, and under his guidance we will proceed onwards to Stratford.*

A little below Hampton Lucy, where we rejoined our stream, is the spot already mentioned; we go onwards, and soon come upon a place of more than usual seclusion, shut in by the light trees —a spot whose quiet may be felt. It is a "high bank called Old Town, where, perhaps, men and women,

* I pick out bits here and there from Mr. Knight's description of this part of the river, in preference to giving an entire extract, because we shall then have the advantage of his observation, and I retain my privilege of speech.

with their joys and sorrows, once abided. It is colonized by rabbits. The alder-tree drops its white blossom luxuriantly over their brown burrows. The golden cups of the yellow water-lilies lie brilliantly beneath on their green couches. The reed-sparrow and the willow-wren sing their small songs around us: a stately heron flaps his heavy wing above. The tranquillity of the place is almost solemn." Such are the feelings that ever flow, as flows the current we wander beside; nought can so induce the intermingling of gay with serious imaginings as a river. We pass from the small beauties of the flowers at our feet to the "almost solemn" tranquillity of the shadowy landscape by a pressing on of new thoughts that come we know not whence, and go we know not how.

"But the silence is broken. The old fisherman of Alveston paddles up the stream to look for his eel-pots. We drop down the current. Nothing can be more interesting than the constant variety which this beautiful river here exhibits. Now it passes under a high bank clothed with wood; now a hill waving with corn gently rises from the water's edge. Sometimes a flat meadow presents its grassy margin to the current, which threatens to inundate it upon the slightest rise; sometimes long lines of willow or alder shut out the land, and throw their deep shadows over the placid stream. Islands of sedge here and there render the channel unnavigable, except to the smallest boat. A willow thrusting its trunk over the stream reminds us of Ophelia:—

'There is a willow grows askaunt the brook
That shows his hoar leaves in the glassy stream.'

Near Alveston.

Alveston.

"A gust of wind raises the underside of the leaves to view, and we then perceive the exquisite correctness of the epithet 'hoar.' Hawthorns, here and there, grow upon the water's edge; and the dog-rose spots the green bank with its faint red. That deformity, the pollard-willow, is not so frequent as in most rivers; but the unlopped trees wear their feathery branches graceful as ostrich plumes." These were the scenes in which the boy would lay up unconsciously large stores of poetic imagery. Here he would seek after the "Daffodils,

> "That come before the swallow dares, and take
> The winds of March with beauty."

The thousand-fold evidences of it show that it is "not only a more reasonable view, but one which is supported by all existing evidence, external and internal, when we regard his native fields as Shakspere's poetical school. Believing that in the necessary leisure of a country life, encumbered, as we think, with no cares of wool-stapling or glove-making, neither educating youth at the charge house like his own Holofernes, nor even collecting his knowledge of legal terms at an attorney's desk, but a free and happy agriculturist, the young Shakspere not exactly 'lisped in numbers,' but cherished and cultivated the faculty when 'the numbers came.' We yield ourselves up to the poetical notion, because it is at the same time the more rational and consistent one, that the genius of verse cherished her young favourite on these 'willow'd banks.'

> 'Here as with honey gathered from the rock,
> She fed the little prattler, and with songs

> Oft sooth'd his wond'ring ears; with deep delight
> On her soft lap he sat, and caught the sounds.'"
> *Joseph Warton.*

And with what delight the man, grateful to his Muse who had taught him how he might

> "Some instruction draw
> From the meanest thing he saw,"

had filled his heart with such inexhaustible stores of beautiful thoughts and richest poetry, and enabled him to associate with the sights and sounds of nature the moral and intellectual being of men—with what delight would he return to the scenes of his early youth, to which he owed so much of exquisite enjoyment, now doubly dear, as bound up with all the joys of his home and the dearest objects of his affections!

Beyond Alveston our beautiful river curves widely, and for a little its course is again through open meadows, losing for a brief space somewhat of its loveliness. A little farther, however, more than makes amends for this slight break. In this part of our course—for miles, indeed, either way—"the most romantic spot is Hatton Rock"—a high and steep bank, rearing its brow against the fleecy sky. Its side is covered with an intricate variety of the lesser trees and underwood, hazel and thorn, and the long trailing brambles. From the base of the bank the tall high stem of the abele rises above its fellows, the willows and alders that fringe the edge of the stream. The river rolls over a stony bed, filling the ear with a quiet melody. As you make your way along the foot of the rock, at every slightest bend a fresh and grateful change is before you. Now the light feathery willow glitters

Hatton Rock.

against the deep green of the alder beyond, the silvery leaves of the white poplar tremble all over with the slight breeze that moves not a leaf of the oak beside it, a kingfisher darts from beneath the overhanging bush, and is quickly followed by his mate. A little farther you find yourself shut in by a close barrier of trees; the water seems to have suddenly ceased to flow, and collected into a smooth dark pool, with a thick crowd of trees rising up from it and reflected in it; a closely screened spot, a calm sylvan scene, the perfection of quiet. A swallow flashes close by you, dips suddenly into that pool, and the smoothness is gone in a moment; the trees, and herbage, and blue sky painted upon it, are broken into wild distortion; long lines of ripple circle wider and wider; the surface of the dark pool is ruffled, but all else is tranquil as ever. A few steps beyond, and you have a rougher picture. The trees are fewer, and throw out their branches wider by the rock side; the rock itself comes boldly into view, its surface broken, its summit irregular. A bold tongue of land stretches half across the stream, bald and rugged from the last flood-tide; upon it the black torn trunk of an old willow stands up headless, leafless; from its roots, bare and exposed, a water-rat looks out stealthily. The water curls round it, the wind chequering its surface with long streaks of light like frosted silver, and giving an appearance of life, and even of peacefulness, to the whole. Proceeding onwards, we come upon the richly wooded grounds of Welcombe, but its beautiful dells are not seen from the river. On the other side we see some of the roofs of Tiddington, but nothing that requires or attracts notice.

From Ben Jonson to William Cowper every poet has associated the name of Shakspere with that of his river. There is, however, little need to quote them to convince any one that the Avon is Shakspere's Avon: his own verses tell it, and in strolling along this part of its course, we cannot but feel how entirely he had made it his own. We are again approaching his town; yonder is the tower of the church wherein lie his bones, giving a sober and solemn finish to this graceful landscape. And as the sun is setting rapidly there, see how it shapes out for us images such as perhaps here formed themselves before his eyes:—

"Sometime we see a cloud that's dragonish:
A vapour, sometime, like a bear, or lion,
A tower'd citadel, a pendant rock,
A forked mountain, or blue promontory
With trees upon 't, that nod unto the world,
And mock our eyes with air: . . .
They are black vesper's pageants . . .
That, which is now a horse, even with a thought
The rack dislimns; and makes it indistinct,
As water is in water."

CHAPTER XII.

THE HOME OF THE POET AND HIS GRAVE.

STRATFORD is a clean, quiet town, pleasantly situated on the right bank of the Avon: it is a place of no large size, without any manufactures, of little traffic; its buildings are not very remarkable: one who knew nothing about it might ride carelessly through it without a wish to stop his horse. Were he told that he was in Stratford—the birthplace, the chosen retreat, and the grave of Shakspere, he would however look on all about him with very different sentiments. He would eagerly examine every spot connected with our great bard, or that existed when he dwelt here; especially would he desire to realize the Stratford of Shakspere, to divest the place of all that has been added to it since he walked about its streets, and to reconstruct whatever has been destroyed.

Dugdale gives the history of Stratford pretty fully, and, to what he collected, a pains-taking inhabitant added, some years back, such additional information as the researches of himself and others had brought to light since Dugdale wrote. So that the history of Stratford is pretty well known, and by calling in all the comparative aids that are available to the student of borough and parochial antiquities, its condition at any particular period can be guessed at without much fear of any great

error. The value of this is manifest with regard to the vexed question of the position of the father of Shakspere in society, and its probable influence upon the character and fortunes of the son, the means he might possess of educating him, and many other points of great interest bearing more or less closely upon the early life of the poet. This is treated at length in the Biography above referred to, and there the reader will find the inferences arising from the several facts, or suggested by them, fully illustrated.

Stratford is the name of several towns in various parts of the country, and the same derivation applies to all of them, "a *ford* or passage over the water upon a great *street* or road," and belongs to the time when bridges were few or none. The addition, *upon-Avon*, explains itself. Though a place of some importance long before the Conquest, its early history is a blank. It was ecclesiastical property, and nought of importance disturbed its quiet life. The different monarchs granted to it fairs and so forth at the request of its owners, the Bishops of Worcester; and the inhabitants gradually increased in numbers and in wealth, as numbers and wealth were then counted. In 1542 the Bishop of Worcester exchanged Stratford for some lands in Worcestershire, belonging to the Duke of Northumberland: a few years afterwards Edward VI. bestowed upon it a charter of incorporation, and when, about 1558, John Shakspere commenced housekeeping, it was apparently a flourishing corporate town, with all the array of officers, from high-bailiff and aldermen, to third-boroughs and ale-conner: and with somewhat more than a thousand inhabitants. It had too, no doubt, its market-

Clopton's Bridge.

place, with the town-hall just by. And the approach was no longer by the ford, or the rude wooden bridge that succeeded it, for a lord-mayor of London had, in Henry the Seventh's time, built for the inhabitants a substantial stone bridge. Then, attached to the guild, there was a grammar-school, which must have been in tolerable order, for Edward VI. was careful to provide for that in his charter, whence its name had been changed to 'the king's new school.' "But we are not to infer that when John Shakspere removed the daughter and heiress of Arden from the old hall of Wilmecote he placed her in some substantial mansion in his corporate town, ornamental, as well as solid in its architecture, spacious, convenient, fitted up with taste, if not with splendour. Stratford had, in all likelihood, no such houses to offer; it was a town of wooden houses, a scattered town,—no doubt with gardens separating the low and irregular tenements, sleeping ditches intersecting the properties, and stagnant pools exhaling in the road. Even in the reigns of Elizabeth and James the town was nearly destroyed by fire; and as late as 1618 the privy council represented to the corporation of Stratford that great and lamentable loss had 'happened to that town by casualty of fire, which, of late years, hath been very frequently occasioned by means of thatched cottages, stacks of straw, furzes, and such-like combustible stuff, which are suffered to be erected and made confusedly in most of the principal parts of the town without constraint.' (*Chalmer's Apology*, p. 618.) If such were the case when the family of William Shakspere occupied the best house in Stratford—a house in which Queen Henrietta Maria resided for three weeks,

when the Royalist army held that part of the country in triumph—it is not unreasonable to suppose that sixty years earlier the greater number of houses in Stratford must have been mean timber buildings, thatched cottages run up of combustible stuff; and that the house in Henley-street which John Shakspere occupied and purchased, and which his son inherited and bequeathed to his sister for her life, must have been an important house—a house fit for a man of substance, a house of some space and comfort, compared with those of the rest of the population."* No one who has examined the old houses that remain here and in the villages around can doubt this. An old inhabitant of Stratford assured me that fifty years back such a house would have been deemed adequate to the need of a substantial family. Houses were then occupied by those whose sons, without being any wealthier or higher in rank than their fathers, would not dream of living in them. As for the labouring population theirs were miserable clay huts, often of only one room—now happily almost entirely swept away. The first event that a local historian would note after this time is one that suggests strange reflections. William Shakspere was born in April, 1564; in the summer of the same year Stratford was ravaged by the plague. "From the 30th of June to the 31st of December, two hundred and thirty-eight of the inhabitants, a sixth of the population, were carried to the grave." None of the name of Shakspere appear in the dead-list. Malone says—"A poetical enthusiast will find no difficulty in believing that, like Horace, he reposed secure

* William Shakspere: a Biography, p. 14.

and fearless in the midst of contagion and death, protected by the Muses to whom his future life was to be devoted." We who are not poetical enthusiasts, but plain wayfarers, will believe that another and stronger guardian kept the destroyer from entering that house. The fires to which allusion has been made occurred in 1594 and 1595, when two hundred houses were consumed. The last great fire that happened was in the reign of James I., when fifty-four of the wood-and-thatch houses were destroyed in less than two hours.

In a long range of buildings, belonging to the corporation, which adjoins the chapel of the Holy Cross, is a room appropriated to a grammar-school, to which it is probable that William Shakspere, when the blue sky was thick patched with the small broken clouds, and the cuckoo was calling in the woods, and lords-and-ladies were plenty in the dry dykes, might have gone

> "With his satchell
> And shining morning face, creeping like snail
> Unwillingly to school."

That he did attend this school has been shown to be most probable; and it is folly to affect superior wisdom by the constant exercise of incredulity. This is a place that must be visited. Part of the building is now used as an alms-house; that portion nearest to the chapel is the ancient guildhall. It is over this hall that the old school-room is placed. Till towards the close of last year it was a plain room, with a low plaster ceiling, supported by thick beams, that projected from the sides of the room. A few old forms and desks were in it; and one desk, that looked ruder

and older than the rest, was called Shakspere's desk. This is altered now. The room has been neatly repaired, and restored to something like what may be supposed to have been its original appearance, and it is fitted up more conveniently for scholastic purposes; but it has lost its old look. The desk is gone. How long it had been called Shakspere's desk does not appear. There was probably very little of the old wood left; for I was told by some who had many years back been scholars here, that it was thought a point of duty for every boy to carry away with him a relic of it; and most were expected to supply their friends with fragments. That Shakspere really was educated here is most probable.* It was the fashion in the last century to consider him as unlearned. The result of all the sifting that the subject has had in our day appears to be much that which a diligent reader of his works would arrive at from them, that he received a fair initiation into the ordinary learning imparted in a public school—he could probably read Latin without difficulty, and through Latin he acquired the grammar of his own tongue. The wonderful mental powers with which he was endowed were not left by him uncultivated, nor unfed. His reading must have been extensive, although that is the smallest and least prominent of his attainments. Shakspere will not stand among the Bentleys for his learning; nor among the Burtons for his reading; but he may stand alone for his knowledge, as distinct from either. That is, he *knew* more of the wide world, of man, and all that concerned him, than any one

* See Mr. Knight's Biography.

who ever lived and wrote. And in point of variety, and fulness of information, he was beyond most. Johnson somewhere says, that "he who has read Shakspere with attention will find little new in the crowded world;" and for such an eulogium a man might even be content to forego the honour of being a senior wrangler. We may fairly conclude that his school education cleared the way for that higher education which every man must give himself. Probably even Shakspere's mighty intellect might have derived advantage from higher scholarship; but it is perhaps more likely that his resolute self-dependence would have been lessened, and his originality somewhat impaired. Even he might have been fettered by the golden chains of the ancient giants,—and though he would in the end have broken from the bondage, it might not have happened till later, and a few years in his not long life would have been a grievous loss to the whole world.

Before quitting this building the lower room should be seen. As has been said, this was the ancient guildhall, and in this, when players visited the town, their performances used to take place. Theirs were not regular, and skilfully constructed plays, setting a grave or merry story in a fitting vesture—a living portraiture of man in his wisdom and in his folly—of the good and evil of existence. That it was left for Shakspere to accomplish. These players had some instructive mystery, an allegory perhaps, and a very proper, moral, innocent one too. Dull enough to read now, duller to listen to; but one which then our ancestors appear to have both heard and enjoyed. These players were not vagrants. They were teachers. Their play would be gone to as now-a-days folk go to a

lecture. Among the accounts of the corporation of Stratford are many entries of sums paid out of the corporation funds for theatrical performances; the use of the guild-room being of course free: the players were always a travelling company. Probably there was no charge to the spectators, or a very small one, and there would be a goodly audience. The boy, William Shakspere, might have heard his first play here, and probably did. Perhaps his thoughts were first turned to plays on one of these occasions. We sometimes hear wonder expressed that Shakspere should have continued to write plays, and to retain his connection with the theatre, in his maturer years. The profession of a performer was not then held in more esteem than it has been since; but if he had been disposed to break from it, there would have been even more difficulty then than there would be now, and that even now it would be no easy thing for a man moving in a line of life not accounted a very high one, and who had not received a regular education, to quit that and establish himself in any other, a good many very superior men have had bitter experience of. It does seem, by passages in his 'Sonnets,' that he was sometimes not at ease, but he did that which all must learn to see is wisest,—he turned to the best account his circumstances, and did not peevishly fret after such as were unattainable. All things considered, perhaps there was no form of writing he could in that age have adopted that would have produced so great influence as that he used, it may be, because it was the necessary one. Shakspere did not write merely to amuse—there was a purpose beyond that. He had no other way so ready, none so sure, to impart his own views of

the deeper objects and mysteries of humanity, and he does not appear to have been unconscious that those views were of the largest significance. Clear and subtle as was his insight into man, versant as he was in all the less prominent disguises of society, he saw that he could influence and instruct his countrymen more quickly, more extensively, and more thoroughly through the ear as well as the eye than by the eye alone. Had he written an epic—and it is not given to one man to write many epics—we might have had the noblest the world has seen, and, as a reward for many years of toil, some few hundreds of his contemporaries might have read it, and have studied it. As it was, he burnt-in his thoughts into the hearts of thousands —aroused to noble purpose many a startled and conscience-stricken listener,—for the men of that day were not a sceptical generation,—and breathed a full stream of glorious and gladdening poetry into many an opening mind. That he really did believe that thus holding up a mirror to his fellow-men he should best accomplish a noble purpose, a careful perusal of his works will surely satisfy any one. It is not undeserving of notice that what we gather from his works was his intent, really formed the starting-point of some of the noble German poets of the last century. Many of these, men of the highest culture, looking around them and earnestly considering how they might effect their end, did just arrive at the same conclusion as Shakspere had arrived at in a state of society in many respects similar. In our country, whatever other opinion men may hold of the theatre, they will most agree that it is no longer the powerful instrument for moral and intellectual culture it then was. The

wide diffusion of books, and the equal desire to read them, have so changed our customs; the whole state of society, indeed, is so changed, that there can be little doubt that were Shakspere alive now he would not adopt the forms he found most suitable then.

Adjoining the building we have been looking over, and which was a part of the old Guild, is the Guild Chapel, or Trinity Chapel, a plain unassuming edifice, but not without beauty. The original chapel was of the thirteenth century, but towards the close of the reign of Henry VII. it was taken down, all but the chancel, and rebuilt at the cost of Sir Hugh Clopton. This Sir Hugh was a munificent benefactor to Stratford, the place of his nativity; the fine bridge that yet crosses the Avon here being another of his princely gifts. Separated from this chapel by a narrow street, Sir Hugh built himself a mansion, which at his death he bequeathed, under the name of the Great House, to a nephew; from him it passed to others, and was at length purchased in 1597 by William Shakspere. At this time it was called *New Place*. Shakspere repaired it, and made it his home. He was now only thirty-three, yet he had secured a sum sufficient to purchase this the largest house in his native town. He appears to have been in the habit of spending a portion of each year in Stratford, so long as he continued to practise his profession in London: the last years of his life he lived here entirely. There is no certain record of his manner of life during this period—unhappily memoir-writers had not then sprung up, and it is only by putting together many fragments, none of which, however, were penned till long after his

death, that ever so slight a glimpse of the interior of his home can be obtained. He bears a genial fame here and elsewhere, and we may be sure he was of a cheerful, hearty, open, manly spirit. Nothing more prominently marks his writings than the cordial sympathy they display with all manner of men. His homely life could not but have been one of delightful enjoyment. To escape from the turmoil and many unpleasantries of his London life to his quiet country home, his wife and children, the friends of his youth and of his manhood; to the sweet stream whose every nook was as the face of a familiar friend, and to his books, never so enjoyed as when away from the world's noise and strife, must have been like a renewal of youth; and as his children climbed his knee, and she who had been the gentle approver of all his early hopes and plans, and the sharer of his sorrows, sat beside him, humble and fervent gratitude would sweeten and soften the joyousness with which he would recognise his many blessings. He must have felt that he was not as his neighbours, that few indeed of the men whom he met with could enter even into the glorious imaginings he had embodied, but never lived the man who less gloried in himself or his doings. Frank, sensible, gentle, ready with a smile or a word of wisdom, as either might be most serviceable, his would be a quiet peaceful life here in his chosen retreat—ready to interchange all courtesies with his neighbours or acquaintances—and resting with calm enjoyment in the hourly delights of his home. His manhood was a steady, resolute embracing of the duties of his life; without complaint, without vapour. He knew his work, and he did it. In his

life a wise and good, a sensible, manly man—in his works the mightiest genius.

New Place was rendered by him a most pleasant spot. His garden reached down to the river, and was laid out in the somewhat formal but rich style then prevalent. Here, in peace and quiet happiness, surrounded by his family, and in the enjoyment of a well-earned fame, the last years of his life were passed, and "hoping, and assuredly believing, through the only merits of Jesus Christ his Saviour, to be made partaker of life everlasting," to use the solemn words of his will, written when "in *perfect health* and memory," a month before his death. The fate of the house is singular. He left it to his eldest daughter; and in 1643, while she resided in it, Queen Henrietta Maria came to Stratford with a large army, and made New Place her home for about three weeks. From Mrs. Hall it passed to her daughter, Lady Barnard, and at her death was repurchased by the Clopton family. Sir Hugh Clopton, barrister and herald-at-arms, dwelt in it in the earlier part of the last century. He repaired the house and built a new front to it. "This was the first stage of its desecration." The other stages were quickly passed through. In 1753 the Reverend Francis Gastrell purchased the house: his treatment of it is not a little remarkable. In the garden was a goodly mulberry-tree, which according to tradition was of Shakspere's own planting. This tree had acquired in consequence considerable fame, and gentle Mr. Gastrell found himself pestered with visitors to see it: he loved his ease more than a wilderness of trees, though every particular one had been a poet's planting; in 1756 he cut it down to rid himself of

the annoyance. The wood was purchased by a watchmaker in Stratford, who converted it into a variety of little carved boxes, and other like things, making a small fortune thereby: it has been said that there are articles enough purporting to be made from it to have constructed a man-of-war; but this is only a repetition of an older joke. Mr. Sharpe, the maker of these things, shortly before his death made an affidavit that he had put his name to none (and on all that he made he stamped his name) but those he had made from the true tree, and there is no reason to disbelieve him. These little relics are now sold for considerable sums.

The people of Stratford were angry at the loss of their famous tree, and broke the reverend Vandal's windows. But they had a more serious cause for anger soon. In 1759 he caused the house itself to be razed to the ground. This was a strange and apparently wanton act. The only cause that has been assigned for it is that he claimed to be released from the assessment of the poor's rate, on the plea that he resided a large part of the year at Lichfield; but as his servants occupied the house during his absence, this was refused, and he declared it should not be assessed again. This promise he fulfilled in the manner stated.

A plain house occupies the site of New Place now. The garden is divided and built upon: the Stratford theatre stands on a portion of it. Of Shakspere's house and grounds every trace has vanished. Nearly opposite to the site of New Place is an old house that stood in Shakspere's time; it bears the date of 1596 on its front, having been raised after the great fire of 1595. Better

than any description will it tell the look of a fine old country town in Shakspere's day. It is in admirable preservation,—a delight to look upon. A quaint, elaborate, half-timber structure, built as houses then were with a goodly superfluity of material, and no lack of labour. It is not a large house, about the size of one of the smaller shops in a leading London street, but with more fancy about it than in hundreds of them. If the particular skill expended on every house erected in Stratford for the last half-century were concentrated in any one, it would not approach in any respect to this old one, though it is only of an humble order in comparison with some in other towns. They did not make houses from pattern-books then.

Not far from New Place, on the same side of the way, is the Town-hall, so often named in connexion with the Jubilee. It was built in 1768. It is not remarkable as an architectural object. In a niche outside is a statue of Shakspere presented by Garrick; who at the same time presented a portrait of himself painted by Gainsborough, which hangs in the large room. This large room is a very handsome one, much more handsome than is often met with in a country town.

The Jubilee in honour of Shakspere, and for the glorification of Garrick, took place in 1769. It was sufficiently absurd in its details, but those strangers who were present appear to have been satisfied, and the townsmen were delighted; it may, therefore, now pass without further question. Cowper inserted a passage respecting it in his 'Task,' that has far more bitterness than the occasion called for. There remains nought more to require attention now but the church. The

stranger, however, must visit the fine old bridge, if only out of respect for its generous builder: it is a well built and handsome structure. Some time back an iron foot-bridge was affixed to one side of it, the old way being only wide enough for carriages. The appended part nowise disfigures the original. It still bears the name of Clopton's Bridge.

Proceed we now to the last spot of all: one dear to the lovers of our bard, as the place in which he lies after all his glorious achievements. Stratford church is a structure of large size and unusual beauty. The bold free hand of the old English architect is seen to advantage here. It is placed on the banks of the Avon, which is fringed by a few willows, and from the river our church appears of surpassing gracefulness. It has transepts, nave, chancel, and aisles; a fine tower and steeple. The tower, transepts, and some other portions are of the early English style, and very perfect; the remainder belongs to a later period, and is not less graceful. Its windows are some of them full of rich tracery. The approach from the town is by a curious avenue of lime-trees. The whole appearance of the pile with the surrounding objects is extremely pleasing. Beautiful as is the exterior, the interior is even more so. It has very recently been fully restored, and with very great skill—so great skill, indeed, is displayed, that little is left to desire. All the barbaric refinements and embellishments of the last two centuries have been swept away—would they were in every church in the country—and there is really now a fair restoration of the whole to its original state, with some little concessions, indeed, to modern requirements,

but all done in the spirit of its original contrivers. And this is as it should be. Let us have all that really belongs to the primal state, but it is mere pedantry, or worse, to insist on having such things brought back as are now obsolete. Assuredly the original builders of these noble piles would have been the last to devise such things if there had not then been a use for them. The old font that was here in Shakspere's time is here no longer, but the new one is modelled from it.* Two handsome stone pulpits have also been placed here. The monuments in the church are many, and, besides *the* monument, are interesting. One chapel is entirely filled with those of the Clopton family, and many of them are handsome. On the north of the east window is a marble tomb to the memory of John Combe, the friend of Shakspere, and whom he has been charged with libelling in some rhyme that would have disgraced a Thames waterman. The statue of Combe was executed by Gerard Johnson, the sculptor of Shakspere's bust. But all else sinks into insignificance before the monu-

* "Its history is somewhat curious. The parochial accounts of Stratford show that about the middle of the seventeenth century a new font was set up. The beautiful relic of an olden time, from which William Shakspere had no doubt received the baptismal water, was, after many years, found in the old charnel-house. When that was pulled down it was kicked into the churchyard; and half a century ago was removed by the parish clerk to form the trough of a pump at his cottage. Of the parish clerk it was bought by the late Captain Saunders; and from his possession came into that of the present owner, Mr. Heritage, a builder at Stratford."—KNIGHT, *ubi supra*, 24. It has since passed into the possession of the proprietor of the Shakspere hotel, on whose lawn it now stands.

Bust of Shakspere at Stratford.

ment of Shakspere, rendered, too, so doubly interesting by the likeness of him it has preserved. The monument was rather a showy one originally, having been fully coloured. The bust of the poet is in a recess between two black marble pillars: his hands rest on a cushion; the right holds a pen, the left a sheet of paper. The bust was executed by Gerard Johnson, a native of Holland, and, it is said, was thought by the friends of the poet to be a good likeness. It has the appearance of being a likeness, but it was not executed till some time after Shakspere's death. It is a careful work, but not a masterly one: what would be the worth now of a real bust from the life by some Chantrey of that day? This represents him in his full manhood, a comely, pleasant man; but it wants the living look of genius. Originally it was coloured to

represent life; early last century it was very carefully restored, the original colours being exactly reproduced. Towards the close of the century, Mr. Malone, the editor of Shakspere, obtained permission to bring it more into accordance with the superior taste of the day. Accordingly the colours were scraped off (some say the bust a little scraped too), and the whole was painted over with one uniform tint of white. It is a bitter evil that our national memorials are thus at the mercy of every ignorant and perverse blunderer: this is no isolated case of destruction or mutilation; it has been going on everywhere and on all kinds of ancient monuments for centuries, and it is going on still, and probably will continue so to do as long as there remain any to deface or to destroy. The original character of Shakspere's monument is gone for ever. It may be painted again, and a proposal was made to that effect some short time back, but there will always be extreme uncertainty about the correctness of the repainting, if, indeed, it be true that Malone had the old paint scraped off—but it would be worth while endeavouring to ascertain if any of the original colour remains under the present coating. The Shakspere Society has a painted bust, but there is no proof of its authenticity. Some gentleman, whose name I have forgotten, is said to have one also coloured from the original, but it is probably of no value. The original appearance of the monument is thus described, and it will be remembered that this bust was set up by those who knew him best:—"The eyes were of a light hazel, the hair and beard auburn. The dress consisted of a scarlet doublet, over which was a loose black gown without sleeves.

The lower part of the cushion was of crimson colour, the upper part green, with gilt tassels." The inscription is too well known to need repetition. His remains rest under a plain freestone a few feet from the wall. The lines on this have been almost universally misprinted, and distorted in appearance by the admixture of large and small letters, it may therefore be as well to give them exactly as they occur:—

GOOD FREND FOR JESUS SAKE FORBEARE,
TO DIGG THE DUST ENCLOASED HEARE;
BLESTE BE $\overset{\text{E}}{\text{Y}}$ MAN $\overset{\text{T}}{\text{Y}}$ SPARES THES STONES,
AND CVRST BE HE $\overset{\text{T}}{\text{Y}}$ MOVES MY BONES.

This grim inscription, whoever placed it there, has had its effect. Shakspere's bones have been spared.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE TOWING-PATH.

HITHERTO it has been necessary to make our way along the river as best we could, with some risk of offending against the laws of trespass; the rest of our course is a smooth one. In 1637 Mr. William Sandys, of Fladbury, did at his cost and risk make the Avon navigable as far upwards as Stratford-upon-Avon. We in consequence shall have a path prepared for us the remainder of our journey. Rivers are seldom rendered more beautiful by being rendered navigable. Nor is the Avon—but, what is quite as rare, it is not rendered less so. Whatever alterations man made in nature's river have become old with time, or nature has so altered them that it again wears her livery. There are no straight cuts, no smooth banks, no stiff fence, no close horse-road. The navigation is conducted in a primitive fashion. Horses were not employed to draw the barges at first, nor are they now. At a huge heavy-laden craft five or six strong men may be seen tugging laboriously; a miserable service for human beings to be put to. These bargemen do not bear a very good name. They are said to be brutal in their minds as in their labour. It is a pity both cannot be reformed. Men bred up to such an employment—mere animals of draught in fact—cannot be expected to be

much better than these are, and it is others, who have it in their power to remedy such a state of things, that are chiefly to blame. It is said that a horse-path could not be made along the river-side without an expensive process, as the owners of land would oppose it, which, with the large sum necessary to construct the way, is more than the somewhat limited traffic would be likely to repay. However it may be, it is a painful sight to see those men dragging their barge along this river, which from its many curves would be extremely hard work for horses.

In the immediate vicinity of Stratford the Avon cannot be called beautiful. The meadows are flat, and only broken by clipped hedges and a few pollard willows. About a mile out of the town there is, however, a high bank on the left of the stream thick set with large trees, and not without its nightingales in their due season. This hill is one of the choicest spots for its views near Stratford; an excellent view of the town is obtained from its summit. The river is increased considerably about a mile and a half below Stratford by the junction of the Stow, and from thence there is an equal increase in beauty. An old, simple, rude lock is reached near Ludington, that would have been quite a treasure for one of those fine old Dutch painters, who would take the commonest objects and change them into a vision of beauty. A primitive-looking, clumsy lock, a rude wooden hut, and a foaming weir in the foreground and mid-distance, with a plain grey church-tower backed by tall trees beyond, and a sky filled with big black clouds teeming with moisture overhead, and diffusing wide and deep shadows, would have made

a goodly picture in their hands. Very beautiful is the river by Ludington. The country is broken up into gentle slopes and uplands, and both meadows and uplands are well dotted with trees; the stream winds in devious curves, and is thickly sprinkled with alder and old mossed pollard oaks and hawthorn bushes; and an outlying cottage or two enliven the meadows. These parts abound with every kind of song-bird, as Drayton, who was a native of Warwickshire, and sings of this river with an ardent delight, notices.

> "At such time as the year brings on the pleasant spring,
> Then with the early morn the feathered sylvans sing;
> And, in the lower grove, as on the rising knole,
> Upon the rising spray of every mounting pole
> These quiristers are percht."

And then in a rich stream of poetry gives a prolonged but far from tedious description of the various melodists. Ludington is a little street of lowly thatched cottages, with their slips of gardens; farm-houses of somewhat larger dimensions, and a village alehouse; not set in two straight lines, but tossed about anyhow: quite the ideal of those rustic hamlets that hide themselves away from high-road travellers. The village, whose church-tower peers over the trees on the other side of the town, is Weston-upon-Avon; a pretty secluded place, but beyond our reach now. Plodding slowly along this right pleasant way we presently arrive at Binton bridges. The stream is here divided into three or four channels, and a line of bridges is carried across them, whence the name. The village of Binton lies a little away from the river on the right, but has nought in it to call us aside. A hill

Near Ludington.

Mill at Welford

of moderate height has the Bidford road carried over one side of it, from which or from its summit there is a view of the valley of the Avon. Welford, on the other side of the river, is a picturesque place, with a good-looking church bearing the date of 1565, and some fine large trees. This, too, should be visited; but we will not linger over this part of our journey. Here, by the river, is an old mill, with some old houses by it, and some old trees, a weir, with a rush of white foaming water; and to contrast and complete all, the bend in the river makes a bay, in which the whole is as in a black glass mirrored. A place Gainsborough might have painted or Price described.

And so we journey on; bright sunny landscapes everywhere cheering us; hundreds of joyful larks rising and rising into the blue sky, their quivering riant notes growing fainter and fainter, and then, with one loud prolonged burst, dropping swiftly earthwards: all bright flowers shining as gems on our path; and the still cheerful river, gliding slowly along, our pleasant companion and guide.

The Hillboroughs, Great and Little, lie a little out of our way, but we need not seek them; they have little to show that deserves regard. There is an old house in Great Hillborough that is called the haunted, and Shakspere's name is mentioned in connection with it; he being reported to have celebrated it in most exquisite verse. Passing by Hillborough, Bidford Grange is soon reached: a lovely spot, the very loveliest of its kind along our river. The scenery about is rich and sylvan. The river is broken into two wide branches and flows over broad weirs, forming two fine cascades; on its bank are a couple of picturesque mills, with

their great black wheels on the outside, and behind, at a very little distance from the water side, is the Grange, an old brick manor-house with gables and oriels, and stacks of those handsome chimney-shafts that always tell you there is a house worth looking at, when you catch sight of them among the tall elms. This place is very ancient. The town of Bidford, and a large extent of lands, belonged to the Norman conqueror; his woods were four miles in length, and a mile broad. This spot, no doubt, was also his, for his record states him to have here four mills, worth xliii*s.* iii*id.* His half-brother, Bishop Odo, had lands and woods here valued at x*s.*, which had been wrested from their Saxon owners, Ernulf and Ernegrin. This manor was, by the Empress Maud, granted to the monks of Bordsley, who retained it till the dissolution. In the inventory of their possessions is an entry of "a certain mansion, named Bidford grange, with three mills, reputed parcel thereof." In Bidford church there is an aisle that may also be reputed parcel of it, being called "Grange aisle," and appropriated to the use, in life and death, of the owners of the grange. There is not much in the village of Bidford to reward a visit. It consists of one long narrow street, which forms part of the Stratford and Evesham road. There are a few old houses in it; one of them was the old Falcon Inn, where tradition says Shakspere used to visit to drink Bidford ale and play shovel-board. One of these visits, according to the said tradition, was remarkable for its consequences. There was a Whitsun-ale at Bidford, and young Shakspere, with a party of his companions, went to it, having accepted a challenge to try their prowess in ale-drinking against a

Meadows at Welford.

Bidford Grange.

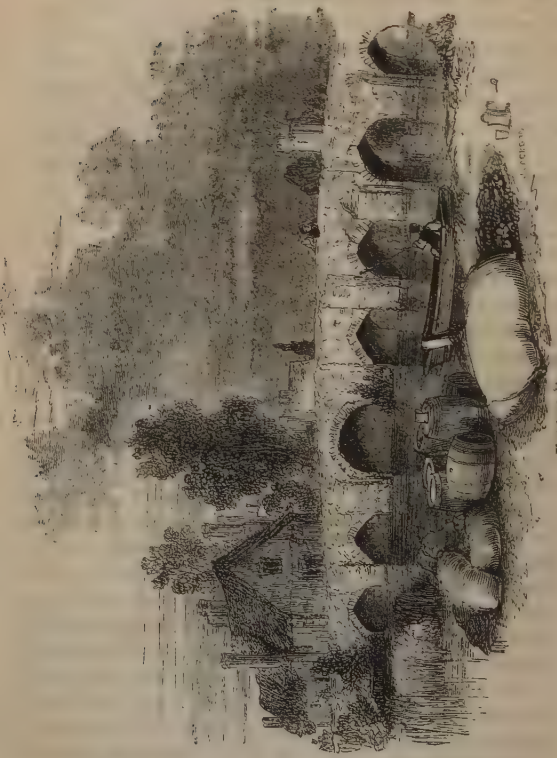
party of Bidford men. The men of Bidford proved the strongest, and the others endeavoured to return to Stratford. Their potations had been so deep, however, that they were constrained to rest on the road, and accordingly they took refuge under a crab-tree, little more than a mile from Bidford; here they slept from Saturday evening till Monday morning, when they were awakened by some labourers going to their employment. His companions entreated him to return and renew the contest, but Shakspere refused, exclaiming, "No, I have had enough; I have drinked with

> "Piping Pebworth, dancing Marston,
> Haunted Hillbro', hungry Grafton,
> Dudging Exhall, papish Wicksford,
> Beggarly Broom, and drunken Bidford."

"Of the truth of this story I have very little doubt," says Mr. Samuel Ireland, who had the honour of first printing it. Of its entire falsehood in every part and particle, I have less. A more absurd tale to father upon Shakspere was never invented, even by Mr. Ireland or his son. Not a word of it has the semblance of truth; and it were idle to attempt to refute what it is impossible to believe. The people in this neighbourhood still repeat the *verses*, and ascribe them to Shakspere; and the tree, till its destruction some twenty years back, was called Shakspere's crab. But all this amounts to nothing, in point of value, as corroborating the story. The fact, as regards these traditions as they are called, is most commonly, that they are a conglomerate of odds and ends that visitors, acquainted with what books tell of the places, have repeated to the country people, at various

times, who have added a little cement to make the several versions cohere, and stuck in their own local tales as an additional embellishment and assurance. Whenever a person is in especial repute in a neighbourhood, everything thereabouts he has a hand in, according to tradition. He is the nucleus, about which all the crystals form—the magnet, whose attractive power is absolute.

Over, on the opposite side of the Avon, again, is Barton, where once dwelt, on the heath, "Christopher Sly, old Sly's son of Burton Heath; by birth a pedlar, by education a card-maker, by transmutation a bear-herd, and now, by present profession, a tinker." Barford bridge is on the line of the great Roman way called Icknield Street, or rather it is just below it; for the bridge was erected where it would not interfere with the ancient ford, that the traffic might not be impeded during its construction. It will be most convenient and most interesting to proceed now on the left side of the river, and we may therefore cross the bridge. And here the character of the scenery speedily changes, and assumes a grandeur we have not hitherto met with. The river spreads out wider, though somewhat shallower, over a rougher and rocky bed, and "makes sweet music with the enamelled stones." A large mass of crag rises up boldly from its left bank, a long steep cliff full of bays, and in some parts bare and unsheltered to its base; in others, wild geraniums and other flowers that cling in like places, with patches of many-coloured mosses and lichens, deck its face; and thick foliage hides its foot and drops into the clear stream. A delightful place, reminding one of those lovely northern rivers; a place for a poet



Bifford Bridge.

The Marl Cliff.

to linger by, and breathe sweetest inspirations; a place for a painter to revel in, and sketch and sketch, till he is fain to leave off from pure satiety; a place to gladden every tourist's eye and heart as he contemplates its surpassing beauty, and finds in every turn a fresh delight. Whatever spot may be overlooked, Marl cliff must not.

This extreme loveliness does not last long: the high ground recedes from the water or slopes down to it; and though it is still beautiful, it is a lower kind of beauty. It will be well to ascend this cliff, after passing round its base, for the sake of some glorious prospects from it. Wide open lands stretch far away to the east, and the beautiful river may be traced for miles flowing through them; and rich woodlands and villages, with their churches, agreeably diversify the prospect. Away in the other direction the scene is more various and more beautiful. Fertile meadows, crowded with cattle, stretch wide and far; a ridge of hills recedes into the dim distance; the river, winding like a snake, and, as it gleams under the evening rays and reflects the lustre of the coloured clouds, looking like one, is in parts hidden among the foliage, and again steals out beyond. From a hazy uncertain vapour the tall tower of Evesham Abbey rises nobly; and beyond all is the huge gloomy mass of Bredon Hill. Opposite to us is Salford Priors, where is a nunnery; a rather fine building: the village is of no moment, but close past it you may see the Arrow glide on its way to the Avon. On the left of Salford is Harvington, a village that looks pretty enough from this spot, but is rather far off to tell much about it.

A little way back from the cliff lies Clive Prior,

a place that formerly belonged to the ancient Rothschilds of these parts, the monks of Evesham. It is a scattered village, with a very broken-down aspect. Near the church are some remains of an old brick building, perhaps of the priory; in an open space there is a parish elm, of huge dimensions in its trunk, but, like the village it belongs to, it is the worse for time and trouble, having lost its top. The continuation of the range of hills, of which Marl Cliff is the chief, after leaving Clive, takes the name of Littleton. Just here is a barrow, and close by the river a square stone stands on the summit of the hill; it is about three feet thick and not quite so high, rude and plain, without any inscription, but with a large square hole in the top, and several smaller ones around it. I could not find any one who knew anything about it, and I cannot meet with any notice of it in any work I have referred to. Ireland seems to notice it; that is, he notices a "large rude stone;" but his description of it and of its situation is very different from this stone. He states it to be intended to mark the site of the battle of Evesham; but it could hardly be placed here for that purpose, as that battle was fought on the other side of the river, some two or three miles distant. From this stone there is a wide and beautiful prospect.

The next place calling for notice is Offenham, so named, some say, from King Offa, to whom it once belonged. He gave part of it to the monks of Evesham, and they afterwards obtained the rest. It is a large village, with no noticeable buildings. One thing noticeable it has though, standing up in the centre of the street—a tall gaily-painted May-

pole, telling of the days when it was "impossible to sleep,

"On May-day morning,"

when

"Young folks would flocken in everywhere
To gather May-buskets and smelling breere;
And home then hasten, the postes to dight,
And all the kirk pillars, ere daylight,
With hawthorn buds, and sweet eglantine,
And garlands of roses. . . . .
Then to the green wood they speeden them all
To fetchen home May with their musical;
And home they bringen, in a royal throne,
Crowned as king; and his queen attone
Was lady Flora, on whom did attend
A fair flock of fairies, and a fresh bend
Of lovely nymphs. O, that I were there
To helpen the ladies their May-bush bear!"

SPENSER's *Shepherds' Calendar.*

When we might here

"Have seen the Lady of the May
Set in an arbour (on a holy day)
Built by the May-pole, where the jocund swains
Dance with the maidens to the bagpipe's strains."

BROWN's *Pastorals.*

And when "envious night commands them to be gone," have seen her grace each of the "merry youngsters" with a dainty gift, so that

"None returneth empty that hath spent
His pains to fill their rural merriment."

England was merry England then. All shared in the joy of the season, whatever other things were amiss. There is a feeling gaining ground everywhere that these customs of our olden time were not altogether so foolish or so childish as

some wise men have represented them; and there is a desire to return, not to the old forms, for they are dead and cannot be recalled to more than a galvanic life, but to the spirit that dictated these observances. It would be a large boon, and a graceful one, if this day, so rich in old associations, so delightful in its season, should be again made a universal holiday. What a world of joy would be diffused if all our close-cabined townsmen could escape for one day into the fields at this sweetest of seasons.

CHAPTER XIV.

MONKS.

VERY lovely is the Vale of Evesham. It has indeed for its loveliness been compared with another valley through which also flowed a river; but the comparison is of the Fluellinian order. Evesham town is not situated in the fairest portion of the vale, nor does it add to its beauty. The town is seen to most advantage at a moderate distance. Then the lofty bell-tower is the principal object, and by its stately proportions imparts an air of dignity to the town, that disappears as you draw nearer to it.

Striking as the tall tower appeared at a distance, the stranger will find it to be far more impressive when he stands beside it. The mouldering fragments of stone, fretted over with tracery nearly illegible—the light ash or graceful birch springing out of the crumbling walls, and mocking with its fresh greenness the surrounding desolation: the grassy floors and the rank nettles, the grimness and the gloom, that ordinarily belong to a ruin—none is here. Fresh, clean, and sharp are the carvings—undisturbed even the delicatest finials of this tower, almost as when Abbot Lichfield saw the top stone laid. It is like looking on the cold corpse of youth. When that enormous spoliation—that is veiled under the soft word Dissolution—

occurred, this tower was yet unfinished, in some of its minor details. Whether the freshness of the work deterred the destroyer from raising his hammer against it, or the townsmen purchased it for their own use—or whether the good old bishop, who had watched its rise with such interest, being yet alive, procured its safety—or whatever may have been the motive—certain it is that it was spared when all the other parts of the abbey were battered down. During the first thirty years of the reign of Henry VIII. the abbey of Evesham was the largest, the fairest, and the richest in all these parts: at its close the monks were homeless wanderers, their possessions given to scheming courtiers, and their beautiful house desolate. Any one who has gone through the preceding pages ever so cursorily must have noticed the vast extension of the monastic system—occupying a place in every town, and in some way connected with the most secluded localities. The land did indeed "swarm" with monks and friars in the six centuries preceding the dissolution; and every one who would read aright the history of his country *must* pay some attention to the question of the influence of monachism. Indiscriminate abuse of the system can only arise from ignorance: but how far it is deserving of censure, or how far valuable—what effect it had in advancing or retarding the progress of society—and whether it acted uniformly either way—these are important questions, not to be answered here, but which may be illustrated slightly in looking for a brief space at the history of this abbey.

One of the most famous of English saints was the founder of Evesham. He left behind him his auto-

Bridge at Evesham.

Bell Tower.

biography, which few saints did in those days; and from that and other equally authentic sources here follows his story. Some things in it are unlike those that happen in these practical times, and I do not vouch for their truth. They may all be found set down in good monkish Latin, and the authors of them must be answerable for them.

Egwin came of a good family: his father being of the blood royal of the noble Mercian kings, and his mother no less honourable. Egwin says nothing about his early days, and his biographers have not done much to atone for his neglect. The date of his birth is not stated, nor the place, further than that it was in what is now known as Worcestershire. From the nobleness of his lineage, the brightest prospects of fame, or wealth, or honour were open to him; but he had from his childhood been of tender thoughts, and had early resolved to abandon all the flattering lures of ambition, and the gilded toys of worldly grandeur. In accordance with this determination he entered a religious house, and he who had tasted only courtly luxuries willingly submitted himself to the hardest fare and meanest drudgery. After he had continued a long season employed in the inferior services of the convent, and had won the good-will of his superiors, he was promoted to the priestly office. So eminently did his piety shine, and so manifest were all his good works, that the King Ethelred, who then ruled over Mercia, employed him in matters of doubt, and he became the king's chiefest counsellor; in which office he so pleased the king by his care and prudent conduct, that upon the death of that holy prelate, St. Ostfor, Bishop of Worcester, about the year 692, he conferred that great dignity upon Egwin.

But the people of that place had not long been converted from heathenism, and retained many ethnic and uncomely customs, and led very dissolute and wicked lives, which sorely grieved their new bishop, and he could not keep silence, but reproved them, and charged them to amend. Then they rose up against him, and seized him and carried him before the king, charging him with tyranny and many bitter things, and refusing any longer to own him as their bishop. When this scandal was declared unto the Holy Father at Rome, he commanded the bishop to appear before him, and give him an account of all these things. Thither he immediately prepared to go; and that he might show how humbly he accounted of himself, and appear as a criminal before his judge, he caused a pair of iron fetters to be made, like those they put upon horses, and, having put his feet into them, he caused them to be locked, and the key to be thrown into a still pool in the Avon river. In this manner he went forward to the city of Dover, where he took ship and sailed straightway to Italy. But, behold, a marvel! This most magnanimous endurer of hardships and toils is to become (says the monkish chronicler) a wonder to men and to angels—to all people and nations a spectacle! His attendants had gone to the Tiber to angle for a fish—for even saints need dinner; they had scarcely cast in the line when they hooked a large salmon, who, instead of struggling to escape, leapt ashore—a feat that most likely did not greatly amaze the attendants, for both fish and fowl used in those saintly times to display a very remarkable readiness to supply a saint's table. Having secured such a prize, they did not stay longer, but hastened home with it, when,

WHITEFORD,

lo! on opening the fish they found in him the key of the bishop's fetters; which were, of course, immediately unlocked.

There was little inquiry made by his holiness the Pope into the charges that had been advanced against the saint after this; so manifest a miracle would have satisfied a Turk; and Egwin was at once declared free from fault, and, being loaded with honour, was sent home with especial recommendations to the regard of the king. Ethelred immediately restored him to his see, and appointed him to other honourable offices, instituting him also governor and teacher of his children.

Among other marks of his friendship, the king gave to him a very large tract of land. It was wild and uncultivated, covered with dark and dense forests, and overrun with thorns and brambles; an impenetrable, horrific place, but one which Egwin had a liking for on account of its solitary and savage state—and also because he kept pigs, who could there procure plenty of provender. This place he divided into four parts, appointing a swineherd to be the chief man in each. The names of these four were Eoves, and Ympa, who were brothers; and Trottuc and Carnuc, two brothers also. To Eoves he gave the eastern part in charge; and as this is the only portion we shall hear of again, the rest may pass unnoticed. From this man the place came to be called Eovesham, or the dwelling-place (home) of Eoves. It happened that a favourite sow belonging to this swineherd one day strayed away into the thickest of the forest. Eoves spent several days in looking for her, and at length wandered so far into the dense and almost impenetrable woods that he entirely lost his way; he called

anxiously to his companions for succour, but none came, and he was filled with terror. After long searching everywhere for a way of escape from the danger that beset him, he at last saw, to his surprise, his sow, having three young ones with her. When he called her by her name, she came speedily to him and testified in various ways her joy at finding him. The sow and her young ones led him away; after some interruptions and circumstances that filled him with great wonder, she brought him to a large clear space, where, behold! there stood a virgin, with two others beside her, clad in celestial raiment, holding in their hands psalters, and singing holy melodies. The chief of these virgins, Egwin writes, was more beautiful than any earthly one, more resplendent than the rays of the orb of light, fairer than the lily, more lovely than the hue of the rose. Eoves understood not what this vision meant, nor did he dare stay, but, driving his swine before him, he returned with all speed to his home. What things he had seen he hastened to make known to his master, who being anxious to see the place himself, was by Eoves led thither, and there it was permitted to him also to see this vision, and he heard a voice from the chief virgin say—"This place have I chosen:" then he understood that here he was to found a holy house. Thus as Æneas was guided by a milk-white sow to the place where he should build his city, so was Egwin led by means of the same kind of creature to select the spot whereon to erect his abbey. And in memory of these two great events—first, the wondrous marvel wrought on behalf of Egwin when he was in bonds at Rome; and, secondly, the discovery of the site of the abbey through Eoves—the abbot and his

brethren did have in their arms the key and the chain and the horse-fetters duly figured and emblazoned; on their common seal, also, the horse-lock, and besides that the swineherd with his swine in the wood, with these words thereby—

> "Eoves her wonede ant was swon,
> For-bi men clepet this Eovishom." *

The virgin, too, is there drawn saying to Egwin what runs thus in English—"Behold the place which I have chosen." There is much beside on the seal which need not be described here.

Egwin had no sooner seen this vision and heard the words than he commenced building the monastery. This was in 703, or a little before, and it was finished in six years. Meanwhile Ethelred, the king, had died; but Kenred, who succeeded him, was no less generous to Egwin; and when, in 709, the prelate went to Rome to obtain a charter for his newly founded abbey, Kenred accompanied him, as did also Offa, King of Essex: these monarchs went to Rome for the purpose of resigning their dignities and obtaining admission into a religious order—so humble-minded often were kings then. Egwin soon obtained what he required at Rome, which was, in addition to the charter, a release from the cares of his episcopal office, and the acknowledgment of him as the first abbot of Evesham. On his return his charter was read before a convocation of the clergy of the diocese, and readily allowed, and then he proceeded to the con-

* Eoves here dwelt, and was a swain,
Wherefore men called this Evesham.
This seal is engraved in the last edition of Dugdale's 'Monasticon,' vol. ii., and in the 'Archæologia,' vol. xix. pl. 5.

secration of his church. Some say he did not resign his bishopric and retire to Evesham till later in his life, but it is most probable that he devoted himself to it entirely from its opening. The last years of his life were spent in quiet and seclusion. He was in high repute not only for his piety, but for a certain faculty of seeing visions that he possessed: he is said to have announced the death of Aldhelm during his second journey to Rome, and it happened accordingly. Some of these visions are given at considerable length in his autobiography, and also in a Book of Visions he wrote. They are to be found as well in the Acta Sanctorum, but they will not be here repeated. He died on the 30th of December; but whether in 714 or 720, or in one of the intermediate years, is quite uncertain. After his death many miracles were effected by his corpse.*

This narrative is one of a large class, and it is a question of great importance to the student of history what is the exact light in which it is to be viewed. This, of course, cannot be gone into here; but a few words are necessary in connection with this story. It has been suggested that the original writers of these works did not mean the marvels related in them to be understood literally; and it appears possible that such was the case. They were addressed to recluses, not to the world at large; and those portions might have been a kind of poetic embellishment—a conventional way of speaking, to be understood much as the invocations addressed to the Grecian and Roman deities, in which the authors of the last century so largely indulged—like graces in music, not properly belonging to the

* Vita S. Egwini, Cott. MSS., Nero E. 1. fol. 22, &c.; Acta SS. Jan. v. i. 690, &c.

matter in hand, but intended to exhibit the skill of the performer. Any other view is not easily reconcilable with veracity on the part of the writers. This Egwin, for instance, appears to have been in his ordinary conduct a just and honest man; yet he relates these marvels as happening to himself, which he must have known was not true. The story of the fish has appeared in a hundred shapes since the time of Tobit. That of the sow, as was hinted, is a mere reproduction of the similar one of Æneas. If we could believe that these authors meant these parts of their tales as fictions, they might be read even with pleasure; for their marvels are little likely to mislead; it is only when one lies like truth that there is danger: as Thomas Fuller says in a sentence that goes at once to the root of the matter—"Small grit and gravel may choke a man; but that stone can never stop his throat which cannot enter into his mouth." It becomes, however, of course quite another matter if there existed the intention to deceive. And however it may have been with the original writers, it is certain that those who followed them intended them to be understood as actual occurrences. But then they were not personally acquainted with the real circumstances, and the veneration they may have felt for the parties who were the chief actors in these marvels may have prevented them questioning their accuracy.

In looking over enclosed and cultivated pastures, and busy towns, and thick-spread villages, we are apt to forget the former condition of the surface of the country. The Vale of Evesham is now, and has been for centuries, well cultivated, and very fertile; yet we see it was a "horrid wild, a dense impenetrable wood," when Egwin founded the

abbey. He came here with his monks in 709, and from this time the origin of the town may be dated. A town, indeed, commonly sprung up where there was a monastery. Not only would many things be required for the supply of the monastery; but the safety generally to a great degree secured by a religious house, with many other circumstances, would induce traders to establish themselves about such a place. So entirely was this the case, that if a monastery was removed in early times, the townsmen (as at Salisbury) generally removed with it. The early history of the abbey may be gone over very rapidly. All passed smoothly with it till the beginning of the tenth century, when it was destroyed by the Danes. It was, however, restored a few years afterwards, and became flourishing. When the Domesday Survey was made it possessed 21,000 acres of land, and had just been despoiled of 12,000 by Odo, the Conqueror's brother, and another Norman. About this time the abbot began remodelling the abbey on a magnificent scale; and it may serve to show the manners of those times to mention his method of raising the needful funds. There had been left ready for the purpose of building, five chests filled with silver by his predecessor; these chests he emptied before the work had proceeded very far; and then, in order to fill them again, he took the shrine of Saint Egwin, and sent the monks with it round the kingdom begging. This would be a sure method then, though not that most commonly adopted in such a case. The building of the church went on slowly, and not always fortunately. Twice the bell-tower fell; owing the first time to faulty construction, and the second to lightning. The whole was not fully completed till

1319. It remained with little change or addition from this time to the dissolution.

A curious chronicle of the abbey is preserved among the Cotton MSS.; a short passage from which, as given in the 'Monasticon,' will let us see something of the household arrangements of the old monks in the eleventh century:—There were in the Abbey sixty-seven monks, five matrons, three poor brethren, three clerks; and sixty-five servants—so that they were likely to be well attended to. Of these servants five served in the church, two in the infirmary, two in the cellar, five in the kitchen, seven in the bakehouse, four in the brewhouse, two at the bath, four looked after the clothes, two were shoemakers, two served in the orchard, three in the gardens, one at the gate of the close, two at the great gate, and five in the vineyard; four attended the monks who went abroad, four were fishermen (there are most dainty eels in the Avon here, and we know there were salmon, for one took a journey to Rome to meet the first abbot), four waited in the abbot's chamber, three in the hall, and two were watchmen. On the whole a very neat division of labour; creature comforts too were evidently not neglected then. There is nothing very remarkable in the history of the abbey or abbots. One event happened worth mentioning, as an example of the power of an abbot when a haughty noble tried it. About 1150 William de Beauchamp, whose castle was at Bengeworth, on the opposite bank of the Avon, with a body of his servants and retainers broke into and robbed the abbey church, and violated the cemetery, and did other violence. The abbot in his turn excommunicated the whole of them, and after

a while Beauchamp was forced to submit. The abbot, as a punishment for his daring, razed his castle, and converted the site of it into a burial-ground. Abbots were not men to be trifled with. But we must run over the course of the two centuries preceding the dissolution, and note the lives of the monks then.

Edward II., in 1322, called to his great council twenty-eight from among the chief abbots of England, and created them parliamentary barons; of these the abbot of Evesham was one, but he was seized by an illness that suddenly manifested itself among those thus honoured of their king; fourteen of them being so stricken that they were unable to attend his majesty. The abbot of Evesham sent two of his monks as his representatives. From this time matters went on pretty regularly; lands being added to lands, riches flowing in abundantly, and sometimes for a spendthrift king some going out, to the abbot's vexation, and to the little profit of any one. Now and then a quarrel or a lawsuit provides the monks with matter for gossip, and the abbot and prior with a large show of business, but all comes round again. What if it be the archbishop himself who will wring from us what is our own—we need not mind him, we are strong enough to resist, and we can beat him too. And if the mighty Earl of Warwick will disturb us, and come and break our enclosures, and even slay our tenants, and almost affright our oldest brethren into a belief that he will destroy the monastery itself—he shall be made to put up his ragged staff, and find he is but a muzzled bear; and if our abbot was only a little braver, we would beat the staff about his rough hide—the unmannerly brute. Alas,

these brave times are followed by degenerate ones. Our monks, finding a soft nest feathered for them by the care and labour of their predecessors, sink into luxury. The abbot grows fat, even ordains that at the return of Pentecost every monk shall have for his own individual self a goose, or at least a capon, a quart of wine to help it down, and twenty pennies to spend as he pleases; and our great swaggering strutting prior, who cannot stoop to his own sandals, shall have a double allowance! Monstrous,—it were better to cut off a few of their capon-days and quarts of sack. Twenty pennies too, what good can come of them? We shall soon see what it will come to. Forty years roll away, and abbot follows abbot, and we are getting fatter and lazier, and now nothing will do for our jovial brothers but they must choose their prior to be abbot, a good companion, can sing a song too, as we hear brother Richard ventured to hint it to him, but he called it his psalmodizing, but that ought to be done silently, and this was in over-quick time, but it was no use saying more about it, those twenty pennies have produced results! Our new abbot is a merry one, says it is fitting we should show hospitality; but his guests are not the poor, as the song says—

> "At the top of the table sit abbot and prior,
> With baron and justice, and jolly young squire;
> Hobbing and nobbing,
> Drinking and winking,
> At the tales they tell and the jokes they crack,
> Over their venison and ripe old sack."

But this must end: our coffers are getting empty. Jews come about the place and have long interviews with the abbot, not about spiritual affairs.

It does end; and we find, when the truth must be told, our abbot's good living has emptied the coffers, and we are in debt at least a thousand marks. A huge sum, how can we pay it? What shall we do? There is one Brother William who used to be here, a thin slow-speaking man, he never drank the wine, did not eat half his capon, used to look grave when the fine company came, ventured to whisper to the almoner about it, and got sent away to a poor cell we have at Auster. He has done wonders there. Made the poor cell a rich one, we hear he is a very good manager, and so humble and simple withal! never scarce touching what we give him when he comes over here, as if it were too good for him, and speaking so gently and meekly to us, as though he were unworthy of our regard—we will make him our abbot—he shall rule our rents and we will rule him. What fine times *we* shall have. Our abbot shall be drudge now; we have been drudges long enough. Brother William is made Lord Abbot. Looks into the treasury, looks into the accounts; calls for the cellarer and kitchener: is closeted next with our old prior, who takes to his bed straightway: what will come of all this bustle? Our abbot calls us together, tells us we have all done amiss, and—appoints a fast. Great is the commotion that day. We make sore complaints, do many things, but nothing will avail, and we always come off worst in the struggle. We must be patient, for our abbot is very fond of 'discipline.' Our prior dies, the cellarer takes to water, and is picked up one morning in the Avon. It is sad work. But our thin hard-living abbot is getting ill too. We can find so many ways to trouble him,

that he declares he never has rest. Why should he, he has spoilt ours. The lords and the squires too all about do not like him, and they ride over his grounds and break his fences. It is plain he is beaten. He has six years of toil, and he leaves a goodly sum in our coffers and no debt unpaid. After all, he was a fine fellow—we ought to speak well of the dead. But no more brother Williams. There is our sub-prior, quite another person; he has often said as we were all together at the lavatory before dinner, that if he were Lord Abbot, poor monks should not be forgotten, and so we will have our sub-prior. The sub-prior is chosen, and in return he has a grand feast; and moreover, makes the day of his election an annual holyday. We are to have a fat buck sent us from the deer-park at Offenham, always on that day, to make merry withal, and twenty pence given to each of us. And that we may not want venison, he makes our park much larger, and as our sack is ofttimes too new, and not in good order, he has a fine wine-cellar constructed. People are grumbling about us, but there does not seem to be any occasion for it—we go on very well. When he dies we choose our cellarer, he lives some twenty years as abbot, and then we find him dead. But the abbey has got into bad repute. The next abbot chosen therefore is another kind of man, and he sets zealously about the reformation of the house. But another Reformation is in progress, and abbots and abbeys will be swept away together by it.

There were many bright exceptions; but there can be little question that at the Reformation the monks had become more open to censure than at any previous period. It is impossible to read the

notices of them that occur in writers of all descriptions without feeling this. Nor can it perhaps be said that there was not need for some great change at the time of the Dissolution of Monasteries in 1537. But in palliation of that measure nothing can be said. It is the largest, coarsest, and most unprovoked robbery that monarch ever committed on his subjects. Every reason put forward to justify it was a plain untruth. From the beginning to the end every step taken was equally vile. Sometimes the detestable evidence accumulated by Henry's commissioners is adduced in his favour; but those commissioners were the greatest scoundrels in this country, excepting their master. The extent of the robbery is extraordinary. It is settled, that at least a fifth of the entire land in the kingdom then belonged to the monasteries! The amount of misery involved in the treatment of the monks and nuns must have been inconceivably great. The abbot of Evesham then was Clement Lichfield, who appears to have been an entirely worthy man, not the slightest scandal is breathed against him in a time when few in his position could escape it. He was elected abbot in December, 1513, and died in 1546. He had been compelled to pay large sums of money at various times to the king as "gifts," as well as in other ways contribute to his avarice and that of his courtiers, yet he found funds sufficient to embellish the monastery, erect chantries in the churches of St. Lawrence and All Saints; and finally, as his chief work, raise the noble bell-tower. In what year he commenced this structure does not appear; but it was scarcely finished when the abbey was surrendered to the king in 1539. Lichfield did not surrender his abbey;

seeing that it was impossible to resist the royal power, he, at the instigation of Cromwell, resigned his office, and retired upon a small pension to a manor-house at Littleton, a place we passed near Clive. One of the younger monks was inducted into his office, and he had the merit and honour of surrendering the monastery—for which he received his pay. At this period the possessions of the monastery were very large, there being in the county of Worcester fifteen manors belonging to it, in Gloucester six, Warwick three, Northampton two, with lands, farms, rents, advowsons of churches, &c., scattered through these and some other counties. Altogether the income was valued by the commissioners at above two thousand pounds, and it was of course much higher; but even that would be equal to a large sum in the present day. The noble buildings were quickly despoiled. One Philip Hobby received the grant of them, they having first been stripped of their leaden roofs and of the bells. The abbey did not remain long in possession of his family, for Fuller, writing somewhat more than a century afterwards, says, "I find not to whom it was first granted. By a long lease it was in the possession of Mr. Andrewes, father and son; whose grandchild, now living at Berkhamstead, in Hertfordshire, hath better thriven by God's blessing on his industry than his father and grandfather did with Evesham Abbey. The sale of the stones whereof he imputeth a cause of their ill success. Lately it was Sir William Curtis's; and I know not to whom his son sold it." ('Church Hist.,' vol. ii. ed. 1841.) Its destruction must have been very rapid; a century after this Hobby received the grant of it, Habingdon wrote a survey

of Worcestershire, in which he says that there only remained "a huge deal of rubbish overgrown with grass." There can indeed be no doubt but that "the Abbey church, with its sixteen altars, and its hundred and sixty-four gilded pillars, its chapter-house, its cloisters, its library, refectory, dormitory, buttery, and treasury; its almonry, granary, and storehouse; all the various buildings for the service of the church, and for the accommodation of eighty-nine religious inmates, and sixty-five servants, were with a few exceptions, ruins in the time of William Shakspere." Grose thinks that there is "every reason to conclude that out of Oxford and Cambridge there was not to be found so great an assemblage of religious buildings in Eng-

Gateway.

land." Of all these, there now only remain the bell-tower before mentioned, a gateway, and a few scattered "bits" of the abbey. The tower is a square structure, divided into three stories, and rising to a height of 110 feet. The whole of its surface is pannelled, it is strengthened with double receding buttresses at the angles, also having pannelled faces, and crowned with pinnacles. The gateway is a little lower down. Its front, which is away from the river, has been richly carved; a double row of niches, in which have been figures, occupy the receding curves of the arch. It was originally the entrance to the chapter-house: it now serves as that to a vegetable garden.

Very striking is the appearance of the churchyard as you enter it from the street. Directly before you rises the beautiful bell-tower, and in the same enclosure, on either side of it, stands a goodly church. It is rather an unusual thing to see two churches in the same piece of ground, but some other examples of it occur; one much finer than this has been noticed at Coventry. Of these

Bengeworth Church.

two churches, one is of very ancient date and very beautiful; it is a choice specimen, in its kind, of the early English style. It was strangely permitted to go to decay, and a few years back was a complete ruin; it is again restored. The other church is more modern and plainer. The abbey buildings were beyond this churchyard—lying between the bell-tower and the river, and stretching far on each side. There is nothing of very great note in the town, nor in its history. On the other side of the river, the village of Bengeworth, which formerly belonged to the Abbey of Evesham, is worth visiting. Its church contains some interesting monuments.

CHAPTER XV.

VALE OF EVESHAM.

The Murder of Evesham, as the old chronicler called it, closed a struggle memorable in English history. We must visit the site of it; the battle we need not relate. From Offenham the river flows southward to Evesham, round which town it curves, and then returns directly northward to Chadbury, nearly opposite to Offenham. To a person looking from a point sufficiently elevated above the village of Hampton, a mile beyond Evesham, this part of its course would bear a rough resemblance to the horns of a stag. The antlers open gradually from the base, where they meet in a blunt angle, to the top, where they turn a little outwards. The points are a mile and a half apart, the medium distance below is about a mile; from top to base two miles; the line of the antlers somewhat under five. The space they enclose is unequal in its surface. At the top of the horns it is high and broken, but declines rather rapidly to the base, where it is low and flat. Evesham lies near the base on the right branch. The high ground towards the top of the antlers is the site of the battle.

De Montfort had arrived at Evesham by somewhat hasty marches from Wales the day before the battle. Here he expected to be joined by his son with a strong reinforcement. But young De Montfort

had been met near Kenilworth by the Prince Edward, and utterly defeated, escaping himself with difficulty. In the morning the old earl, ignorant of the fate of his son's army, sent "Nicholas, his barber," to the top of the Abbey tower, to see whether it was approaching; who, hasting down, reported that he saw a few miles off the banners of young De Montfort. He then resumed his station, but soon beheld the advancing army cast down the banners which they had placed in their front in mockery, and raise those of the prince, of Mortimer, and of the recreant Gloucester. The old lion was caught in the toils; but making a desperate effort to break through them, he hastened towards the Kenilworth road; when he ascended the hill and saw the prince's troops before him blocking up the outlet, he felt that to force a way out was impossible. "God have mercy on our souls," exclaimed the earl; "our bodies are theirs." He then drew back his troops a little, and took up the best position that was left to him. Returning to our figure of the antlers, we shall easily see what that was. The army of the prince had marched by the Alcester road, and now occupied the high ground which lies between the points of the antlers; the earl's station was an eminence between the antlers, somewhat south of the prince, with the river on each side of him, and behind him there was a bridge at Evesham, but it was guarded by forces beyond. The only escape was by victory, and victory was to be wrested from far superior numbers. De Montfort was a veteran soldier, and is said to have declared, when he saw the manner in which he was being enclosed, "I have taught them the art of war." But he was in this case overmatched in

military talent by the young prince; and it is difficult to conceive how a skilful soldier could have suffered himself to be so entrapped. The battle-field was a hollow between the stations of the two leaders. The fight and its terrible consequences are familiar to most. The earl's army fought with every disadvantage. Inferior in numbers, worst in position, disheartened, their struggle was a brave one, but hopeless. The slaughter was horrible. "No quarter for rebels," was the prince's command, and the butchery went on as long as there was a man to kill. Thus fell the very flower of the chivalry of England. Well might the chronicler say, in concluding his narrative, "Such was the murder of Evesham, for battle none it was." * Yet a few were spared. It was commanded that if any should be found among the slain who yet breathed, they should not be put to death, but be permitted to recover if they could. The body of

* The Camden Society has recently printed an edition of 'The Chronicle of William de Rishanger of the Barons' Wars;' together with a contemporary account of 'The Miracles of Simon de Montfort,' in a thin volume. This period, so important in our history, has been of late carefully investigated. Sir Jas. Mackintosh has a valuable sketch of the character of De Montfort; and Thierry has thrown much light upon all the circumstances connected with the war and the actors in it. Lingard's account is full and valuable—valuable, because it puts you in possession of all that extensive reading and acuteness can discover, to make the side of irresponsible power appear to be the right one. This his history will always do, when that power is not opposed to that of the ancient church: this is of great service, because the student of any historic event should endeavour to look at it from the side of each party. An exceedingly valuable work on the subject has been published lately, 'The Barons' War,' by W. H. Blaauw, Esq.

De Montfort was mangled in a way it makes the blood boil to read; and after making sport for the noble victors, and one of the victors' ladies, the hands and feet were cut off and sent to several places.

This is not the place to discuss the merits or demerits of either party. Of the entire badness of Henry there can be no question; what was the real purpose of De Montfort is one more difficult to answer. One thing however is clear, that his measures, so far as he had proceeded, were of a wiser and more generous kind than those of almost any of the great leaders in public affairs since the entire prostration of the country under the Norman bondage. By the great body of the people he was adored, and it is probable that it was his concessions to them that led to the defection of many of the barons, and to his consequent ruin. But whether he was not impelled by motives of ambition in his course, and whether his concessions were not induced by a belief that he thereby was the more surely working out his personal aims, are points that history has not yet made clear. His death aroused the strongest sympathies of the people. His truthfulness, his constancy of purpose, his courage, his piety, were themes all loved to listen to and repeat. The barbarous usage of his corpse by the mean-spirited and perjured king, and the sight of his limbs scattered over the country, would deepen the regard with which they had before looked upon him, and it is not wonderful that a people who had considered him as their only hope should now venerate him as a martyr and a saint.

Vast is the difference in the aspect of the place now to that it presented at the close of that dreadful day. Could you have been there on the even-

ing of that 4th of August, 1265, fearful would have seemed that wild waste, blackened with the blood of thousands, whose corpses were its horrible covering. The only sounds would have been the unattended moanings of the dying, unless you caught the subdued whisper of a monk striving to afford the only consolation the lingering soul would now heed, or, perhaps, the mockery of one who was seeking to discover amongst the dead the corpse of his enemy. Were you now to see that place as an August sun shed his last rays over it, all would be tranquil, smiling, peaceful; the golden corn would be its adorning, and the cheerful stillness be broken by some of those feathered songsters that yet pour out their melody in this generally silent season.

The exact site of the battle must be made out by the visitor among enclosed fields, but it will not be difficult to find. He must not be misled by the title of "the battle-well" applied to a sort of small pool in a field not far from Twyford. The battle could not have happened there, though it might have served to refresh the soldiers before or after battle. There is a little island on the Avon at Twyford, not far from Offenham, called "Dead Man's Ait," in which it is said the bodies of the dead were buried. In the last century a very large number of bones were dug up there.

We will now return to our river. On the west of the battle-field, and probably forming a part of it, are the house and grounds of — Rudge, Esq. The house is a rather handsome building, and just by it stands a tall tower, erected within these few years, which commands a noble view of the vale of Evesham. This part of our journey is exceedingly beautiful. The river, which is now of large size,

flows through a rich valley, from which broad and lofty hills ascend on each side. On our right are the high grounds on which the battle was fought, now covered thick with fruitful fields and the wooded slopes of the manor-grounds. On our left is the broad side of Bredon Hill, round whose base the Avon winds for miles. Before us are the Cray-comb hills. All these hills are irregular in form, and under every position of the sun yield large masses of shadow for the eye to repose on from the glare of the opposing light. As you wander slowly along the river side, the scenes melt into each other like the "dissolving views," surprising you by a wide change, although the progress has been scarcely discernible. This valley is a favourite home of the singing-birds; if there were somewhat more large timber-trees about it, they would make it their paradise. Of larks it is now the chosen dwelling. They carol to each other from every point of the sky. It is a delightful place. Drayton, who knew these parts well, quite revels here. He asks—

> "Great Evesham's fertile glebe what tongue hath not extoll'd?
> As though to her alone belonged the garbe of gold."

And with his usual noble daring personifies all the objects about, making them truly "discourse most eloquent music." But his music must be wasted on us now. Only we may borrow his words to point out what may be seen from the hill on the opposite side of our stream. He makes Evesham Vale, who is of course a lady, address Bredon Hill "in a long and zealous speech," in the course of which she says—

> " I this may speak of thee ;
> From either of your tops, that who beholdeth me,
> To paradise may think a second he had found,
> If any like the first were ever on the ground."

In the margin he calls the addressed—" Bredon, a hill environed on every side with the Vale of Evesham."

From the Craycomb hills, which we soon come to, there are some glorious prospects. The river just beneath them makes a bold sweep, and you have a grand view both forwards to Pershore and backwards to Evesham. The vast form of Bredon Hill is here seen to great advantage ; and from various parts of the range glimpses may be caught of the massive Malvern hills, the only mountain-like hills in these parts. The rambler on this side of the stream must not miss these Craycomb hills, or he will lose some of the finest views he has yet met with. On the other side Bredon Hill might, perhaps, make him amends for losing these. After satisfying himself with these views the tourist must descend the hill side before he reaches Fladbury, for the sake of a delightful view of a different kind that he will obtain as he approaches that village. Fladbury is raised pretty high above the river ; the side of the hill on which it stands, and the narrow slip of land at the foot of the bank, are covered with luxuriant foliage. The trees are large, and grouped so closely as entirely to conceal the hill side, while the church tower rises over them. As you come upon them, the effect of the mass of rich dark foliage doubling itself in the stream, and contrasted with the stretch of open landscape beyond with the river winding through it like a stream of silver, is extremely fine. It is unlike any part of

Fladbury.

the rich scenery you have been passing, and in the afternoon, when the sun is behind the hill and the trees are seen in their massiness, the rambler will hardly believe it to be less lovely.

Fladbury itself is worth looking at: it has a goodly parsonage-house, and some others that have an old-fashioned solidity about them that imparts a tone of respectability to the place. It was here that the Mr. Sandys who made the Avon navigable to Stratford lived. He was a Sir Hugh Middleton-like man, and his public spirit met with a similar return. He spent all his fortune before he could complete his undertaking, and was obliged to turn it over to the government, who took the lion's share of the profit. Bishop Lloyd, a divine of considerable eminence in the reign of Anne, was incumbent here, and lies in the church, where there is a handsome monument erected to his memory. He was the author of a 'Chronological Account of Pythagoras,' that is now out of date, a 'History of the Government of the Church,' that has lost its authority, and some other works whose memory has perished. He is also said to have assisted Burnet in preparing his 'History of the Reformation.' He was a man of note in his day, and his memory was preserved with some care afterwards. Dr. Nash gives three portraits of him in his 'History of Worcestershire.' He was a good, careful minister, did not neglect his duties, and looked sharply after his tithes. He was rather fond of expounding the Prophets, which, says Nash, rather querulously, "some of the small wits, his tenants, said he spelt with an *f*," but the good man could no doubt pocket the joke along with the payment, and, like Budgell, be content to

let them enjoy their laugh at him without reproof, in the assurance that, to an indifferent observer, he had the best of the jesting. The name of Fladbury is Anglo-Saxon (fleodan-byrig, according to Nash), and signifies a town by the river. In the reign of Henry III. there was a vineyard, and the authority already quoted says that two acres of ground attached to the rectory still bear the name of the vineyard.

From Fladbury there is a ferry by a mill over to Cropthorn. The towing-path, however, is on the right side all the way from Fladbury to Pershore, and if the rambler means to follow the river he will of course keep along it. But Cropthorn is an exceedingly pretty rural village. It is situated on high ground away from the main road, and overlooking the river: it is quite a pleasure to stroll about it on a fine day. The cottages are humble, timber-framed, thatched dwellings, but quiet and pleasant looking; small and plain, but free from squalor: the peasantry in these parts are said to be comfortably off, but there are many signs of poverty in several of the places we have passed through. Cropthorn Church is small, but neat. In it are some monuments to the Dingley family, to whom formerly the manor belonged. One is really deserving notice. It is to the memory of Francis Dingley, Esq., who died in 1624, aged 74. The inscription on it says,—"He happily matched with Elizabeth, daughter of Thomas Brigge, Esq., and Mary Hoby his wife, by whom he had issue *eleven* sons and *eight* daughters, and with whom having spent the space of fifty years in comfortable wedlock, he died in peace, leaving behind him the precious memory, &c. . . . Eliza-

beth, his late consort, hath consecrated this mean monument of her love and his merit." The figures of this happy couple are sculptured side by side on their tomb.

The river now makes another bold sweep by the foot of Wyre Hill, and the landscape, though somewhat less striking, is still very beautiful. Bredon Hill continues to form the prominent object, and will do so for miles. Now and then the Malvern hills are seen, and from the higher ground gloom out grandly. There is nothing in the villages requiring notice in this work; many things occur that will please the traveller, and they will be none the less pleasing if they are unknown of before to him. Beyond Wyre the hills recede, and the stream flows through wide meadows. Pleasant enough to wander along in the summer time, but subject to floods in the winter. Pershore now becomes prominent, and has a fine appearance, backed as it is by the hills before named. The tower, which will have been noticed from every high spot that has been ascended for some time, is now seen to great advantage; and as you come near, forms, with the town, from which it rises so majestically, the bridge, the river, and the surrounding country, a not unpleasing picture.

CHAPTER XVI.

BUTLER'S COT.

No doubt the reader is by this time pretty well weary of hearing of abbeys and monks; but out of justice to Pershore, something must be said about its abbey. Nash, in his 'History of Worcestershire,' has a long account of the abbey and its privileges, which as here abridged may be compared with those of the rural Abbey of Stoneleigh. A passage I have marked as a quotation (giving it in the original words) is rather startling, and it is not easy to believe it could be meant to be understood literally.

The origin of the Abbey of Pershore is carried back to about 604, a religious house having been founded here at that time. It received additions at various times, and is thought to have been remodelled by Edgar. According to a record belonging to the Bishop of Worcester, Edward the Confessor gave half the town of Pershore, with the appurtenances, to the abbot. But in the time of William of Malmesbury it had greatly decayed, having, according to him, lost half its revenues. Being originally of wood, both church and convent were several times destroyed by fire; first, about 1000, again 1223, and again 1287. In one of these the records of the monastery were destroyed, and a commission was in consequence held to de-

termine the customs and privileges belonging to it, by the examination of witnesses. Walter the Prior stated the privileges the abbot claimed on occasion of the visitation of the bishop of the diocese: he also gave a long list of towns in which if persons died who held lands, they were to be buried in the Abbey of Pershore; but those who did not enjoy lands were to be buried in the church-yard of Little Comberton. Of the wills of such persons he said, "that the principal legacy ought to be carried before the body of the deceased to the church of Pershore, and there to be valued by the sacrist, and chaplain of the place to which the deceased belonged; after the valuation made, one half to remain with the sacrist, the other half to go to the chaplain; but it was in the option of the sacrist to retain the whole, and pay the value of one-half to the chaplain: all offerings offered for the dead in the monastery, were to remain with the sacrist, &c." . . . . Fifteen other witnesses, eight of whom were monks of this house, confirmed the same. Among them was Robert de Malvern, an old man, who said that the whole tithe of corn of the demesne of the Abbot of Pershore belonged to the abbot and monks; and likewise all the small tithe. Half of the corn tithe of the whole town of Pershore, except the tithe of the demesne of the Abbot of Westminster, belonged to them; and half of the tithe of corn, as well of the freemen as the villeins of Wick did of old belong to the abbot and convent, and likewise of Bricklehampton and Great Comberton (with one or two exceptions, where they only received the third sheaf): and they had also the third sheaf of the whole village of Eckington (excepting of the demesne of Lady Constance de

Lize); the third part of the tithe of flax in the same village; the third part of the tithe corn of Strensham, and the half of the great tithes of Berford, Defford, and Woodmancote.

In succeeding ages other monarchs and benefactors of various ranks added to its possessions. Of course all was swept away in the general wreck. Now there alone remains of it that portion which is used as the parish church of Holy Cross.

Pershore is a respectable and apparently flourishing town, but contains little to detain the visitor. Its vicinity is, however, in every direction very beautiful. From the summit of Bredon Hill there are some views of vast extent, and really magnificent. Stretching away right and left is a rich and various country; the Avon flows along, a stately stream, below, and may be traced far away through a lovely valley. The deep dark mass of the Malvern hills forms here a grand appearance: they are far enough off to present only their broad heavy form unbroken by detail, and there is a kind of indefiniteness about them that renders their distance apparently uncertain, and adds to the sublimity that attaches to a mountain-mass looming heavily against the sky. The view from the highest point of Bredon Hill above Comberton is beyond question the grandest to be met with in following the Avon, and though it will not do to compare it with the sublime views obtainable in a mountain district, it would not even there be accounted a mean one. But the character of the places is so different, that it is folly to compare them. The sublime phenomena of a mountain region are not to be met with here, but from its height and bulk this hill is not seldom capped by clouds. On a

Pershore.

thick gloomy morning the thin clouds may be seen curling and creeping along its side, while others hide its brow, and a traveller might be almost tempted, from the rugged character of some parts of its base, into a transient belief that he was among the mountains.

The villages scattered along its foot do not claim any particular notice here. There are the Combertons, Great and Little, of which the latter lies some little distance from our stream and need not be visited, and the former, which is more pleasant to look at than to talk about, though that would be pleasant enough if space were not beginning to fail, and perhaps the reader's patience also. There is a walk on the right-hand bank, a short way out of Pershore, and extending for half a mile, or somewhat more, that ought to have been noticed, for it is very beautiful, and Bredon Hill looks well from it; but we must not turn back after it. Perhaps too it ought to have been observed sooner, that from the high grounds on both sides of the river after passing Evesham the stream is receiving constant accessions, in the shape sometimes of little rills not much thicker than a thread, and at other of brooks of fair volume; so that by the time it arrives at Pershore the Avon is a considerable river, and, of course, continues to increase throughout its after career. As has been seen, the scenery is of a larger and bolder character as well as the river, and the whole of its course from Evesham nearly to Bredon (it leaves the *town* of Pershore a little on the right) may be safely declared to be a continuous succession of noble scenery. Not the noblest, but only short of it. Beyond Bredon its grandeur is lost—but we must not forestall the future.

From Pershore the river writhes like a wounded snake. The whole way from Evesham is most tortuous. By the road the distance from Evesham to Pershore is barely six miles, by the towing-path it is nearly twice as great. From Pershore to Eckington the proportion is about the same; after that the stream flows through flat meadows, and winds but little. Eckington is a roadside village, with its couple of inns and village shop, and a rather handsome church: a bridge crosses the river just before you come upon the village. The Birmingham and Gloucester Railway also crosses the river near Eckington, and runs between them. A by-road leads from the village to a neat—it can hardly be called a picturesque—mill from which there is a ferry, and the miller's man looks after the ferry-boat. We shall require his service.

The church that looked so pretty upon the hill on the opposite side of the river as we walked towards the ferry, is Strensham church; we shall return to it again, but for the present may pass it by. The village of Strensham is very much scattered; a few cottages are collected here and there, but there is hardly a proper village at all. The object of interest in Strensham is the house in which Butler was born.

We have been talking so much about the traditions respecting Shakspere, that the reader is probably pretty well tired of the sound of a tradition; but traditions about Butler are not so common, and here is one. I was sure there would be some talk afloat about him, and after noticing a few folks, and testing them by a casual question, I saw a respectable and "ancient woman" who

looked like a gossip; her I resolved to experiment on. I had not come across the ferry, but along the lanes from Twining, and I had a good walk before me. After a greeting, I inquired whether she knew the house Butler the poet was born in, and could direct me to it. She said yes, every body knew Butler's cot who lived near Strensham. I let her go on quietly, and by aid of a very few leading questions obtained the narrative of which the following is something like the substance, being however like a tree stripped of its leaves, for her redundancies were by far the showiest as well as largest part. "He was a wonderful man—very. Just like Shakspere, tho', nobody thought anything of him till after he was dead. It's always the case. There's *his* house at Stratford, p'r'aps you've seen it, eh? Well, somehow I thought you had, well now, really, la. I never did, but my husband has, and he says it is n't any better a place than this o' Butler's, and yet they tell him that people come all the way from London to see it. Warnt Shakspere a sort of a poet, too? Well, I thought I'd heard as much. . . . . But as I was a saying about Butler; he was born in that cot you're a going to, and he lived there a long time, they say. He was a little like young men, though (and the old dame looked knowingly, as much as to say, you are not young, so know what that is), a little gay, given to wakes, and so on—a good-natured soul, though, else he wouldn't a died so poor—but all great poets die poor. So, as I was a going to say, his wakes, poor fellow, were the beginning of his troubles. It's often the case, bless you, sir, nobody knows what wakes leads to. So the gentleman as was up at the castle—it was a

standing then—I've heerd his name, but I'm sure I forget what it was, he was a Sir something tho' —the Knight, they call him. Well, he was religious, and so didn't like wakes, and so once poor Butler got a little a-head as you'd say, at one of 'em, and there was a great disturbance. So the knight took the constable and went down to stop the noise—for they say it was on a Sunday, and that made him take it worse. When the knight came down along with the constable, there was the wake a going on in the churchyard, and they'd got a blind fiddler a playing and a bear a dancing —it's true, there's a picture of it at the squire's up at the great house, and I've seen it myself—so he takes Butler and puts him in the stocks. But as soon as ever his back was turned they takes him out, and as all of 'em were a little up, they gets together and catches hold of the knight and constable, for nobody liked them, and claps them in the stocks (there's a picture of that too at the squire's), but they say it wasn't Butler's doings, it was a woman as put 'em up to it—she wasn't a good woman, she used to live just by the almshouses you saw. It was a bad job for poor Butler, tho', he couldn't stop here any longer, that puttin' in the stocks was a regular kill-crow to the knight, and of course a poor man couldn't stand against him. But as soon as ever he got to London he wrote it all out in poetry, and very funny it is too —it is all put under the pictures—la, how I have laughed over it to be sure, only its such a long while ago since it was written as you can only understand a word of it here and there; but 'Liza, that's the parlour maid, says squire can make it all out, and she says sometimes people who come

Butler's Cot.

down from London and the like, to stop at her master's, read 'em and talk about 'em, just as we should about things that are only just written. But la, what's great people like them got to think about else? only they'd better think a little more about poor people while they're alive. And so if that hadn't a happened poor Butler would never a had any need to a gone away from Strensham at all, only then he wouldn't a writ his poetry, perhaps—eh? So there's no knowing what's for the best. God keep us all."

Now here is a tradition in the rough; with only a few of its straggling branches lopped off, and stripped of the leaves. It is easy enough to see how it sprung up; but if nothing had been known of Butler's early life, and this story had fallen into the hands of one skilled in the art of shaping a flam into the likeness of a verity—in other words, a Shakspere annotator of the old school—we can readily comprehend how it might become a very pretty feasible tale, and be made the foundation upon which to raise elaborate theories, and grave deductions, and wise wonderings.

There will be no trouble in finding the cottage, if you cross at the ferry from Eckington; the path to it lies directly before you, it passes over the hill by the side of the churchyard, and across two fields beyond, the stile from the farthest field is directly opposite the lane, a few yards down which on the left the building stands. It is a long low structure, very similar in kind to Anne Hathaway's cottage at Shottery. A plain timbered-frame and thatch cottage. This is also divided, and now forms three tenements. Butler's father was a small farmer, perhaps much of the same standing as some

of the little farmers just by, and a glance at their houses will enable one to form a ready notion of the changes that have taken place since then. The parties who now dwell in this building are very poor, and the place looks rather wretched; but perhaps an examination of it would readily show how the changes have been made that have rendered it so mean looking. The inhabitant of the farthest of the three tenements told me that she had lived in it upwards of forty years. She was a child when her mother took it, at which time that part was a stable, and had no doubt always been so; it was fitted up with strong racks and other stable matters, and, no doubt, was in its original state. There is nothing now of any antiquity about any of the tenements; she told me that the present owner of the cottages ("our squire" above mentioned, I have entirely forgotten his name), is very strict in his orders that they shall not be at all altered. The place has been called "Butler's Cot," and the field behind, "Butler's Close," ever since she can remember.

One cannot feel much enthusiasm about Butler. There is a want of warm-heartedness about him that repels any approach to it. But he was a man of a fine manly intellect, and sharp, clear, piercing good sense. He certainly wanted sympathy for many noble qualities, but generally the things he satirizes are deserving of a keen lash. His wit is one of the most wonderful things in literature, so constant, so ready, and so various. Strange and absurd as the similes often are, they are yet so ridiculously pat that it is impossible to resist them. His wit could not be called

> "An art that cost no pains
> Of study, industry, or brains;"

nor is it of a kind to be enjoyed without exercising them. Its overwrought elaborateness is its great fault. It, too, often seems as though he

> "Had rifled all his pokes and fobs
> Of jimcracks, whims, and jiggumbobs,
> Which he by hook or crook had gathered."

And a good many of his "jiggumbobs" would have been better left in the dust-heap from whence he gathered them. His wit is not a kindly wit. A good deal of it is

> "with great cost
> Extracted from a rotten post,
> Nor of a heavenlier influence
> Than that which mountebanks dispense."

His frequent allusions to the ear-croppings, the exhuming and hanging of long-buried corpses, and other humane practices of the courts of the Charleses, are never, that I can remember, other than sportful. But after all deductions, there can be no doubt of his being a healthy as well as brilliant intellect. One could wish for a large excision from his works, and then the rest would be genuine gold. As it is, his writings are not pleasant to read continuously; they are never opened without pleasure, but they are too strained to enjoy long. I have never met with any one who has taken them up and read them through at once. It hardly seems possible. The constant stimulation could not be endured. Perhaps there is a kind provision in nature to bring on weariness at a certain stage. It were a sad end to be tickled to death.

There do not often occur thoughts of either any great beauty or nobleness. Wisdom there must be, for wit could not hold out without wisdom to back it. Strangely extravagant as his rhyme is,

he could write flowingly if he pleased. His mimickry of pastoral poetry is a proof of it.

> "She led
> The warrior to a grassy bed,
> As authors write, in a cool shade,
> Which eglantine and roses made;
> Close by a softly murmuring stream,
> Where lovers used to loll and dream."

Strensham Church is a more handsome edifice than you often meet with in such a place, and it is very pleasantly situated. There are, in the interior, some fine monuments and brasses. Within the last few years the proprietor of Butler's cot has placed a neat marble monument, with a suitable inscription, to the memory of Samuel Butler, against one of the walls. From the church we may speedily regain the river's side, and follow the towing-path onwards: or if the rambler wishes to vary his walk a little, he will find the lanes and fields from Strensham to Twining yield a pleasant ramble. The river is tame here; the hills no longer approximate to its banks. Bredon Hill still continues not far from it, but there is a line of railway between the hill and the river, and railway and river the next two miles are nearly straight, and run parallel to each other. Twining and Twining Green are thoroughly rustic places. At Twining Ferry we must cross to Bredon, where the hill again abuts on the water, and the river is again for a while picturesque.

Bredon is an old and large village, but it does not appear just now very flourishing. There are some old houses about it, but none remarkable. The church is ancient, and of a superior character, with some Norman carving about it. Dr. John

Prideaux, so celebrated for his learning, his pleasantry, his piety, and his reverses of fortune, dwelt here some time before his death. He was born at a village in Devonshire, in 1578, of humble parents. In his early days he picked up a little reading, and when yet a boy became candidate for the office of parish clerk in a neighbouring village. In this he was unsuccessful, but a lady took notice of him, had him taught a little Latin, and kept him till he was able to enter Oxford University as a poor scholar. He made his way gradually upwards till he at length became Bishop of Worcester. On the abolition of the bishops' incomes after the ascendancy of the parliament, he became so impoverished that he was compelled to sell his books (Ant. Wood); and, according to Dr. Nash, even some scraps of old iron, in order to provide food for himself and his family. According to the same author, his allowance at this time was only four shillings and sixpence weekly; yet he never repined, nor lost his cheerfulness under his heaviest distresses. He lived not to see another change, dying here of a fever in 1650. His works were once in high estimation, but they are now probably seldom referred to. In the neighbourhood of Bredon are the remains of an ancient encampment of large size. After quitting Bredon, the river flows forward in a nearly direct line till it reaches Tewkesbury.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE TERMINATION.

We have now traced the Avon steadily from its source almost to its termination: we have only to look through the town of Tewkesbury, and then we shall part company.

The approach to Tewkesbury is not very beautiful, yet it is pleasant in its way. The river runs through wide flat meadows, that have on the left some well-wooded uplands and sunny slopes skirting them. The meadows are in summer covered with thick rich pasturage, and crowded with cattle; and the lofty tower of the abbey church rises up conspicuous in the distance—a scene that, when the long shadows on a summer evening stretch across the plain, and the sky is full of a subdued golden splendour which the smooth stream reflects with a softened beauty, will remind the visitor of some of the wondrous landscapes of Cuyp. In winter these meadows are frequently under water, and always moist. Just before you reach the town, the river is divided into two or three branches, and an artificial channel carries off a portion of its water a little farther on. The whole of this part has an uncomfortable swampy look. A long many-arched bridge is carried over these divisions of the stream, and the meadows on each side; John Lackland is said to have been the builder of it, or one that occupied its place.

Tewkesbury.

Tewkesbury is an ancient and an interesting town. One Theoc has the credit of being its founder, though antiquarians are not quite sure of it, and ever since William of Malmesbury wrote, other derivations have been proposed and frequently adopted; but Theoc is as worthy of the honour as anybody else, and it were a sort of petty treason to rake up a Greek parentage when there is a good old Saxon at hand. Theoc was a holy eremite who retired—not fearing the ague—to a little cell by the river side here in 707. Other persons came about him for pious counsel, and then they called the place Theocsbury; and after a few years two great Saxon dukes, brothers, Odo and Dodo, built a monastery here, and endowed it with broad manors, enough to maintain a prior and five brethren of Benedict's order. Other noble lords and ladies added other manors, and all went on as it should do till a little before Norman William's time, when a smooth-faced, soft-haired man, one Aylward, whom they called Aylward Snow for his fair skin, set up a monastery of his own at some chalky place in Dorsetshire; and being lord of these parts, made the monastery subject to his new one. But it did not last long. He had a son, like himself a pretty man; and it chanced that being ambassador at Flanders, the earl's daughter there set her heart upon him, but all her soft advances were lost upon our Narcissus. Old story says that no man ever slighted fair lady, but he suffered from her revenge. It was so with Brictric; for the lady out of spite married the Norman, and when he came here Conqueror, she did not forget her former fancy. What she said to her lord about him does not appear, but William was very ready to gratify

his spouse, especially as Brictric had large estates and great wealth, both which William had a remarkable fondness for. Brictric was seized, and put into prison, where he soon died somehow; and so ended the Aylward Snows. William made his wife a present of all Brictric's lands in these parts, as a compensation for the trouble she had endured on account of him. She did not live long, and so it passed downwards till Rufus gave Tewkesbury Manor to a Norman, Fitz-Hamon, who built the present church about 1102. This is the Fitz-Hamon who slew Rhys ap Tuthor, the last prince of South Wales. He was himself killed in Normandy in 1107, and his body being brought to England, was buried in the Chapter-house at Tewkesbury. It was afterwards, in 1121, taken up, and having been carefully wrapped in fine diaper, was carried into the church, and interred in the chancel, where a tomb was raised on the spot, which may still be seen, though the brasses, "wherewith it was adorned," have been long stripped from it. Afterwards other lords took care of the monastery: such was the good Robert, Earl of Gloucester, the son of Henry I., who was a great benefactor to the abbey, and "every Sunday in the year had the abbot and twelve of the monks to dine with him." There is no need to go on with an account of the monastery; it continued to flourish, till the eighth Henry, piously lamenting that abbots should be so fat, and given to luxury, and have so much wealth, determined to cure them of the last evil by transferring their riches to himself, reckoning also that he should by that same stroke cure the former evils. Tewkesbury monastery, at the dissolution, had a clear yearly re-

venue of 1595*l.* 17*s.* 6*d.* royal reckoning, out of which 532*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.* was allowed to the monks as pensions—lucky if they could get it. The buildings directed to be destroyed as "superstitious and superfluous," and the proceeds of the sale of the materials appropriated to the use of the Defender of the Faith, were "the church with the chapels, cloister, chapter-house, the two dormitories; the infirmary, with chapels and lodgings within the same; the workhouse and house adjoining; the convent kitchen; the library; misericorde; old hostelry; chambers; lodgings; new hall; old parlour adjoining the abbot's lodging; the cellarer's lodging; the poultry-house; garner; almonry, and all other houses not among the reserved." But although the king grieved that superstitious buildings should stand, he was open to conviction if he had mistaken their character, and that this Tewkesbury church was not really superstitious, he was convinced by a very cogent argument—483*l.* put into his hands by the parish, and so he graciously permitted it to remain for use as the parish church. The list already given of the doomed buildings, with the following list of those to be preserved, will evince the extent of the old abbey. "The lodging called Newark, leading to the gate from the late abbot's lodging, with the buttery, pantry, cellar, kitchen, larder, and pastry thereto adjoining; the late abbot's lodging; the hostelry; the great gate entering into the court, with the lodging over it; the abbot's stable, bakehouse, brewhouse, and slaughter-house; the almonry, barn, dairy-house; the great barn next the Avon; the malt-house, with the garners in the same; the ox-house in the barton-gate, and the

lodging over the same." The weight of the leaden roofs, and of the metal of the bells, was carefully estimated, but both roofs and bells were included in the purchase of the church by the parish. His Majesty had also reserved for his own use two mitres gilt, 1431 oz. of silver plate, and some ornaments of silver tissue, &c. (Dyde.) The abbey was granted by Henry to Thomas Stroud and two others for 2283*l.* 19*s.* 3*d.* (Fuller), and a small yearly fee; so that the good sovereign had a very fair amount of plunder. According to Dyde there were one hundred and forty-four servants attached to the monastery at the dissolution, but this probably included all who were their farm servants, as well as those of the convent.

The church is a large edifice, consisting of nave, choir, and transept, with a fine central tower rising from the intersection of the arms of the cross. The tower is a good specimen of the highly enriched Norman style. The windows have a somewhat later look. In the church are some chantry chapels, and many monuments of much interest. The monuments consist of those to the memory of the Lords of Tewkesbury, and other personages of eminence connected with the place, and also of some of the persons slain at or after the battle of Tewkesbury. The Prince of Wales lies at the entrance of the chancel; his grave is marked by a plain stone which *had* brasses affixed to it.

The town of Tewkesbury was the property of various powerful barons, including some of the De Spencers, Plantagenets, Nevils, &c., till after the battle of Tewkesbury, at which time it belonged to the Prince of Wales, when Edward IV. annexed it to the crown. In 1609 James granted

it for the sum of 2455*l.* 7*s.* 4½*d.* to the corporation of Tewkesbury.

The church is the only building of any consequence (there are of course the usual corporation edifices) in the town; but there are several old half-timber houses, and some of them are very curious. There are two bridges over the Carron and the Swilgate brooks that here join the Avon; and half a mile beyond the Long-bridge already mentioned, there is an iron bridge of a single arch of 170 feet span over the Severn; it was constructed by Telford, and completed in 1826. Tewkesbury is very liable to floods. It has happened more than once that boats have been employed to carry people *over* the bridge, and sometimes boats have been used in the streets, and the water has even been in the church chancel. These floods are occasioned by the violent and sudden rush of waters, that after heavy rains, or the melting of the snow, pour down from the hills which the Severn, the Avon, the Carron, and the Swilgate drain in their several courses. These rivers meet so close together, that at such times they mutually obstruct each other's flow, and cause a rapid and enormous increase.

The neighbourhood of Tewkesbury affords some pleasant walks. There is a tranquil grace about the meadows, and a freshness about the uplands, that render a stroll along them very delightful. A little north of the town, between the Avon and the Severn, is an ancient encampment, known as Mythe-toot, from whose summit the prospects are striking and extensive. It commands a wide view of the Severn, which is seen to great advantage, being backed by the majestic range of the Mal-

vern hills. These hills are themselves, perhaps, seen more favourably from Mythe-toot than from any other spot in the vicinity. On the other side of the town the Cotswold hills are the prominent object from any elevated ground, and the lanes and by-roads are full of quiet beauty. The Severn, too, will abundantly employ the rambler, but it lies beyond our limits.

There is nothing grand, nothing in any way remarkable about the union of the two rivers. In fair weather the Avon glides calmly into the broader Severn, and then they flow on peacefully together to the ocean.

Before we quit this place we must just glance at the site of the famous battle. It is a little way beyond our river, but we cannot be so near and not visit it. Our starting-point was from a battle-field where a crown was lost; the termination of our journey will be at another, equally important in its immediate consequences. The long and fierce contention of the Houses of York and Lancaster did in fact end with the battle of Tewkesbury. Hall, in his 'Chronicle,' says that the Duke of Somerset, the commander of the Queen's army, "fixed in a fair park adjoining to the town." Holinshed is a little more particular; he says Somerset chose "their field in a close, even hard at the town's end, having the town and abbey at their backs; and directly before them, and on each side of them, they were defended with cumbersome lanes, deep ditches, and many hedges, besides hills and dales, so as the place seemed as noisome as might be to approach unto." The face of the country is strangely altered since then, and it is not quite clear which was the exact spot where he

intrenched his forces. How much the country is changed, one who visits it will see from what Holinshed had observed immediately before. "About four of the clock in the afternoon (of Friday, May 13th), they came to Tewkesbury, having travelled, that night last past, and that day, six and thirty long miles, in a foul country, all in lanes, and stony ways, betwixt woods, without any good refreshing, so that as well the men as the horses were right weary." His fellow commanders objected to the position Somerset had fixed on, but the men could not go on, and to attempt to cross the Severn when a larger army was within a very few miles of them, and hastening on with all possible speed, would have ensured destruction. Yet the place chosen does seem injudicious. It appears to have been a short distance from the town, just by what is now called the "Bloody Meadow," and so situated as to render retreat impracticable, the Severn and the Avon being directly in the rear. To take up such a position in the face of an army flushed with recent victory, while his own troops were newly raised and untried, was a bold venture. But Somerset had evidently resolved to act on the defensive, no doubt in the hope that if he could gain time he should be joined by the Earl of Pembroke, who had assembled an army on the other side of the Severn. He had, too, so strengthened his position, that it appears from Holinshed that Edward could not force it. But however skilfully he had fortified his station, he suffered Gloucester to entice him out by a stratagem, and being unsupported by Lord Wenlocke, who commanded the centre, he was quickly defeated, and then followed the terrible slaughter.

Somerset was a brave man, and perhaps had he been aided at the right moment by Wenlocke the result might have been otherwise. When he found all lost he returned and took swift vengeance on Wenlocke. Advancing to the place where he still looked on without moving, though he saw his fellow-soldiers in disorder, Somerset, "after he had reviled him and called him traitor, with his axe struck the brains out of his head." The old chronicler calls it in his margin truly enough "a terrible stroke," but it was a not undeserved one. Holinshed hints that Wenlocke "dissembled the matter for King Edward," and it is not easy to account for his supineness in any other way. The real struggle and the greatest slaughter appear to have occurred in the meadow before mentioned. The defeat of the Queen's army was complete. Her troops never made the feeblest attempt to rally: the number of them slain in the field and chase was about 3000, together with the Earl of Devonshire, Sir Edward Hampden, and other leaders. The scene that occurred on the following day is well known from the pages of Shakspere, as well as from the histories. Shakspere wrote with Hall's 'Chronicle' before him, and adhered closely to it.

In reading the history of the war of the Roses it appears simply a struggle of the rival families. There is no great principle contended for by either party, and the leading partisans passed from the one side to the other with a facility that almost appears childish. In fact, if the figures were not living and breathing men, and life and death at issue on every encounter, it would appear little more deserving regard than the play of so many

school-boys, or at best a mere quarrel about genealogy and precedence, carried on with a bitterness a little more intense than such quarrels now are in ordinary life, because occurring in a ruder age, and because the stake was of more importance. The grand poetic features of it might excite interest—with Shakspere to point them out they would be even prominent—but for all those great moral purposes which render history so important a study, this period would seem little more than a blank. Yet if we look more closely into the inner life of the country, we shall see that this struggle was really fruitful in most important consequences. It gave the deathblow to feudalism. The great feudal lords were annihilated by it, and the long period through which it was protracted sufficed to raise up a third estate that should go on steadily increasing in power, till it should be at least able to resist the encroachments of both the others. It was during the Barons' war that towns became of importance. It was the war of the Roses that brought the people to feel that they also had rights, and that they might venture some day to assert and successfully maintain them.

THE END.

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RAMBLES BY RIVERS.

THE DUDDON; THE MOLE;
THE ADUR, ARUN, AND WEY; THE LEA;
THE DOVE.

By JAMES THORNE.

WITH NUMEROUS WOOD-CUTS FROM THE DRAWINGS OF THE AUTHOR.

LONDON:
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RAMBLES BY RIVERS.

THE DUDDON.

THERE are few objects in nature more beautiful or more refreshing to eye and ear than a mountain-stream. To a healthy mind it almost seems to impart something of its own lively flow, and bold and buoyant energy. Itself a happy emblem of the purity and vigour of poetic genius, it has ever been an especial favourite with all poets: our own noble band, from Spenser to Wordsworth, have celebrated it in snatches of description, or brief allusions, or fuller and more prolonged notes—

> "Murmuring near the running brooks
> A music sweeter than their own."

Southey, in speaking of one of them, says, "I could sit for hours to watch the motions of a brook." And he must be dull indeed who could wander without emotion along one that has been sung of by a great poet; or not have the feeling its natural beauty may arouse deepened by association with the genius it has inspired.

In the autumn of 1842 we spent some time near the Duddon, the stream which forms the subject of Wordsworth's fine poem of that title; and it has occurred to us that we may be able to impart a

little information to the admirer of his poetry, perhaps even to lead some of our readers who may be about to travel in the lake district to vary the usual route by devoting two or three days to exploring a stream so beautifully described by our great philosophic poet. The Duddon rises on Wrynose Fell, and divides the counties of Cumberland and Lancashire for about twenty-five miles, from its source till it enters the Irish Sea near the Isle of Walney. It is navigable only near its termination, and then but at high tide and by small craft; indeed throughout its course it is scarcely at all serviceable to man, hardly a mill being worked by it. Nor does it, like many other of the mountain-streams, anywhere expand into a lake or even a tarn; yet, even in this region of rivers, it is perhaps unequalled. It runs through a remarkably wild and picturesque country, and presents aspects singularly varied considering the shortness of its course. Wordsworth, in his 'Scenery of the Lakes,' says, "It may be compared, such and so varied are its beauties, with any river of equal length in any country." However that may be, it is surpassed by none in the northern counties. Green, indeed, and he is no mean judge, places the Croglin and Eden first, while Southey puts in a word for his Keswick Greta, and every one remembers Scott's description of its Yorkshire namesake: it is, however, to none of these we are disposed to think Duddon must yield; but we are not so certain as to the Wharfe. Be that as it may, our stream is *very* beautiful, and it is surprising that so few visit it. Hardly one visitor of the thousands who annually resort to the lakes does more than cross it. The country on either side of it is thinly peopled,

[The Source of the Duddon.]

and the guides at Keswick and Ambleside will talk loudly of the badness of the accommodation, the rudeness of the inhabitants, and the roughness of the way. It can indeed only be explored on foot, and it must be confessed that there is neither an hotel nor a gentleman's house throughout: but though the way be somewhat rough and the people unpolished, the traveller who is willing to be pleased will find accommodation, civility, and plenty; and in these days it should be anything but an objection to a genuine lover of rural sights and sounds that the place and the people are so little changed by the march of modern refinement. We are quite sure, if any of our readers will try the course we point out, they will thank us for suggesting it.

We purpose to follow our stream from its source to its termination in the sea, taking Wordsworth's poem as our guide. The source of the Duddon is on the top, or nearly the top, of Wrynose Fell. The best way of approach to it is from Langdale: you ascend Wrynose at Fell-foot, by the old Whitehaven road, which is carried over nearly the highest part of Wrynose. When only pack-horses were used for the conveyance of goods in these parts, this was the main road from Kendal to Whitehaven, a fact the stranger who sees it finds some difficulty in crediting, so rough and acclivitous is it. When the top of Wrynose is gained, a small circle of stones, three of them somewhat larger than the others, will be seen on the right of the road; these are the 'Three-shire Stones,' marking the junction of the counties of Westmoreland, Cumberland, and Lancashire. They are one of the local wonders, and will be readily pointed out to the visitor. Passing these, the traveller must almost directly

turn out of the road, leaving it on his left, and he will soon come upon the source of the Duddon. The water oozes up through a bed of moss, and unless care be taken, the real source may be overlooked and a wrong spot selected, there being several other moss beds a little lower down the Fell. Wordsworth says of it (Sonnet III.) :—

> "How shall I paint thee?
> . . . . . Nature hath lent
> To thy beginning nought that doth present
> Peculiar ground for hope to build upon."

It is, however, no ordinary spot. On such a morning as that on which we visited it—cold, grey, and misty—the huge masses of crag which protrude from the ground, bare of everything but the grey lichen and a few straggling tufts of grass on their highest points; the dull russet clothing of the thin soil; the many mingled and brilliant colours of the wet mosses; the perfect quiet of the air, broken only for a moment by the motion of a sheep or two that have straggled here, hardly it should seem for pasture,—produce together so deep an impression of desolate solitude, as not to be soon forgotten. From this spot a slender thread of water finds its way down a narrow channel; it is, however, soon joined by one and another little streamlet, and begins very quickly to toss along its stony bed in that seemingly joyous mood so characteristic of mountain-streams. Long before it reaches the bottom of the Fell it has acquired a tolerable volume of water, and formed two or three pretty little water-breaks. Its course down the Fell is very tortuous, but if you have some time to spare, by all means follow its "loosely scattered curves," nor forget sometimes to look back. Wordsworth

has devoted a sonnet to these retrospective glances; and it is pleasing to observe how a simple and hitherto unnoticed object will start into beauty at the touch of a true poet, as in nature we often see when a sudden gleam of sunshine illumines some obscure feature of the landscape.

When it reaches the Fell-foot, the broad rocky channel tells that though ordinarily but a trifling stream, it must sometimes present a grand appearance. The mountains here form a sort of coomb, and in stormy wintry weather, or on the melting of the snow upon them, large quantities of water pour down on every side, bringing with them great masses of stone, which, as they are driven against the projecting crags on the mountain-sides, or against each other as they roll along the bed of the stream, make, we were told, a strange turmoil, and may often be heard at a considerable distance. Here our stream is joined by a small one that rises by Scawfell; and now it takes the name of Cockley Beck.* The traveller will here pause to admire the magnificent array of mountains on either hand; especially on the west, where they appear in their full majesty, the rugged outline of the Pikes of Scawfell forming a background of a grander kind than any other, perhaps, in the whole district. So grand is their appearance in this place, that the lover of nature will be tempted to leave our stream for awhile, and wander up the dale towards them; and he will do well. At almost every step some new feature of greatness will present itself, and as the vale winds they will be seen in many various and striking combinations. They who would as-

* *Beck* is the name for a mountain-stream throughout the north of England.

[Cockley Brig.]

cend Scawfell may do so without much difficulty from this vale. But we must return to our stream. Where it takes the name of Cockley Beck it is crossed by a bridge (called by the dalesmen Cocklety Brig, as the stream is called Cocklety Beck), which leads to a small farm-house, the "Cottage rude and grey" of which Wordsworth speaks in his 5th Sonnet, but the "ruddy children" will be looked for in vain—three and twenty years have not passed away without doing their work with them. As the way has been rather long and toilsome, the tourist will do well to enter the cottage; he may be sure of a welcome and some plain refreshment, and may gain, what is always worth acquiring, a little insight into the manners of the people through whose neighbourhood he is journeying. It is, indeed, worth a stranger's while to take some such opportunity to observe the natives of Donnerdale, as the district through which the Duddon flows is called. Our dalesmen are reserved, and must be watched to have their real character caught: but the observer will not go unrewarded. They are a fine intelligent race of men, and worth observing: hardly so intelligent, perhaps, as the genuine mountaineer, and not near so hearty; their reserve is sometimes too near akin to sullenness, and they have not the same sly, quiet humour. The mountain shepherd, too, is not only keener, but more thoughtful; indeed, if you can lead him to throw off somewhat of his reserve, you will find often a depth and extent of thought little anticipated; often, too, a genuine appreciation of the grand and beautiful in nature, with something of a poetic feeling, mingled, it must be confessed, with not a little superstition—but that, some say, is a

chief element in the poetic character. The dalesman has not so much elevation of character, and it will require but little observation to see that a rigid economy verging on parsimony is practised by him; but it is chiefly in the matter of money—a rare article, and carefully husbanded. He abounds in social virtues, and we were told many little circumstances that showed his genuine sympathy with trouble, and his disregard of self in his attempts to relieve it. He is *neighbourly* to a degree only understood in a thinly peopled district. His hospitality—simple, but hearty—we often tested, and always found ready; and though in other matters even more parsimonious than the men, in this the women are by far the most liberal. To be a stranger is always claim enough, and readily acknowledged. They seldom go far from their homes, and seem to have a feeling almost of pity for those who are distant from theirs. Here, at Cockley Brig farm-house, for instance, we were served with milk and oaten cake, and while partaking of it we tried to gossip a little with the old dame; but she was, as the dalesmen say, very *short*, till her own curiosity began to be excited as to our home, and even then it was amusing to see how cautiously she tried to worm out the desired information. "Ye'r no much used to these crags?" she began; but determined to be for awhile as brief as she had been, we replied, "Not much." "Whar do'e gang fra?" "Wide of this," said we. "Ye coom fra Cockermouth, perhaps?" "No, we are from the South." "Fra Liverpool?" "No, from London." "Nay," said she in a tone of mingled surprise and sympathy, "but t'ou *art* a lang way fra hame!" Then setting before us all the good

things the house could afford, she pressed us again and again to eat, repeating every moment, "Dinna ta stint ta'sel." And we had some difficulty in convincing her that, as we had fixed our quarters at Seathwaite, we were in no great danger of starvation. The phraseology of the dalesmen is very singular; they apply words almost as strangely as Americans are said to do. We heard two shepherds, as they were sitting by the public-house fire at Seathwaite, talk about some sheep they had seen at market that day:—"'T was a terrible gurt (great) sheep that," said one. "Ay," replied his companion, "'t was a maist serious grand sheep indeed." And this is by no means an extreme specimen.

The old Whitehaven road crosses the river at Cockley Brig, and here leaves it, passing over the side of the mountain called Hardknot into Eskdale. Somewhat more than half-way down the hill, a little on the right of the road, are the remains of a Roman fortress, "Hardknot Castle," as it is called, which is well worth a visit: there is a fine and very extensive view from it; Scawfell in particular is seen to great advantage. From Cockley Brig the scenery, for a mile or so, is rather tame along the beck, but if there is little in the vicinity, there is much in the stream itself to delight us. Now it has assumed something of the port and strength of a river: the water too, which, like Cotton's favourite Dove, was "black at its source, because it springs from the mosses," has, like it, become "so clarified by the addition of several clear springs, bigger than itself, which gush out of the limestone rocks, that in a few miles you will find it one of the purest crystalline springs you have

seen." Wordsworth notices this: "The water," he says, "is perfectly pellucid, through which in many places is seen to a great depth its bed of rock or blue gravel, which gives to the water itself an exquisitely cerulean colour:" this is very observable hereabouts. And here too are *The* Stepping-Stones: every reader of Wordsworth will remember them, and most will "have a vision of his own" about them. He need not fear that the reality will fall short of his conception. We have seen many, but none sure so graceful:—

> "They might seem a zone
> Chosen for ornament—stone matched with stone
> In studied symmetry, with interspace
> For the clear waters to pursue their race
> Without restraint."—*Sonnet IX.*

And they are as harmonious in colour as symmetrical in form. Of a delicate white with the slightest admixture of blue, they present, as they are reflected in the crystal stream, an image the eye dwells on with a *continuous* pleasure. They are a something to remember. Hitherto our stream has wound quietly among the masses of crag that have, at various times, been brought down by it from its parent fells; but soon after we have passed the stepping-stones, it boldly forces its way through the solid rock, which it has wrought into many strange fantastic forms.

> "Objects immense portrayed in miniature,
> Wild shapes for many a strange comparison!
> Niagaras, Alpine passes, and anon
> Abodes of Naiads, calm abysses, pure
> Bright liquid mansions."—*Sonnet XII.*

The traveller should not leave the bed of the

[The Stepping Stones.]

river here while he can make his way along it; every step brings out some new or quaint device of our fairy-like guide. Not far from the place above referred to is a chasm where the sublime and the fanciful seem striving for the mastery; a strange spot as ever was pitched upon: well might Wordsworth call it the "Faëry Chasm." Its steep rocky sides are of a bright blue-grey tint, deepening under the water almost into azure, and riven into such strange shapes as that "tricksy spirit" Ariel might have delighted to fashion. The scenery too about this spot is very fine: on one hand are Hardknot and its associate mountains; on the other various crags, backed by the majestic mass of Coniston Old Man. Directly in front are Wallabarrow crag and the Pen, with several mountains of moderate elevation and graceful form in the distance.

Here we must leave our stream awhile. We have now reached Seathwaite, where for the present we stay. Wordsworth, indeed, makes his poem a summer day's journey, but he admits this to be a poetic licence. It is quite impossible to explore the scenery of the Duddon in that time. The hasty visitor may indeed see it all, at least as well as he usually sees anything, in two days; but the man who has learned to look on nature with a truer feeling will not, if he have leisure, think as many weeks too much to devote to this lovely region. Seathwaite is a good resting-place: it is in the midst of the finest portion of the scenery, and has connected with it some interesting associations, upon which we shall now touch. It contains too a little inn, in which the accommodation is rude, but the parties who keep it are civil and

desirous to oblige, and the genuine traveller will be content with these. He need not, however, fare amiss: fell-mutton, and ham, and mutton-ham he may always obtain; and trout too, if he will, as Mrs. Glasse directs, "catch them first"—for Duddon is what "honest Izaak" calls "a trouty stream." With these, and the usual addenda procurable in a north-country farm, a moderate man may have, as Cowley says, "not so many choice dishes at every meal; but at several meals all of them, which makes them both the more healthy and the more pleasant."

Seathwaite is remarkable as the place in which "Wonderful Robert Walker" dwelt so many years. Wordsworth has given a very full and interesting account of him in his notes to "The Duddon," to which, or to the second volume of 'The Pursuit of Knowledge under Difficulties,' the reader may refer. It may here suffice to say that he was born in 1709, at Under-crag in Seathwaite, and was the youngest of twelve children. Being sickly in youth, he was "bred up a scholar," and after acting for some time as a schoolmaster, he was ordained, and about 1735 became curate of Seathwaite, in which he remained till his death, sixty-six years afterwards. The value of his curacy when he entered upon it was 5*l.* per annum, with a cottage; about the same time he married, and his wife brought him, as he says, "to the value of 40*l.* for her fortune." He had a family of twelve children, of whom however only eight lived; these he educated respectably—one at least became a clergyman—was even munificent in his hospitality as a parish priest, and generous to the needy, and yet, although the income of his curacy never exceeded 50*l.* per

[Seathwaite Chapel.]

annum, "at his decease he left behind him no less a sum than 2000*l.*; and such a sense of his various excellences was prevalent in the country, that the epithet of *Wonderful* is to this day attached to his name." As Wordsworth says, there is in this something so extraordinary as to require further explanatory details, but for these we refer to the works before named, merely remarking that he spun the wool needed for the family clothing himself, which was made up into the various garments by the female portion of the family; while he spun, he taught the children of his parishioners: then he assisted his neighbours in hay-making, sheep-shearing, &c., besides serving as scrivener, and in various ways rendering them assistance; had an acre or two of land, which he tilled himself, and also possessed and attended to a few sheep and a couple of cows. Many of these employments, and others in which his biographer relates him to have been engaged, are sufficiently unclerical, but we were told, by some of the older inhabitants, of one still more so, and which Wordsworth either did not hear of or thought too unpoetical to repeat. At that time there was no public-house in the place, and Walker was accustomed, they said, to supply any who required such refreshment with ale of his own brewing, charging for it a certain price, and two-pence per quart extra if drunk in his house; the usual place for drinking it being the adjacent field. The circumstance would hardly be worth recording, did it not serve to illustrate the singular simplicity of manners that prevailed. Such a thing can hardly be conceived of elsewhere at that period as a clergyman making his house in

some sort a tavern. Southey indeed tells* that up to the middle of the reign of George II., such cures were held in these northern counties by unordained persons, who commonly added to their scanty income by the pursuit of some manual occupation. The person, for instance, who held the curacy in the Vale of Newlands, near Keswick, at that period, exercised the various trades of tailor, clogger, and butter-print maker. We ought not to omit either, that, amid all his various laborious occupations, Walker is said to have preserved his affections unimpaired, to have carefully and successfully cultivated his intellect, and to have been tenderly alive to the duties of his pastoral office: truly, as Wordsworth remarks, "in this extraordinary man things in their nature adverse were reconciled."

Very many of the simple homely customs ascribed to Walker are yet far from obsolete in the neighbourhood. In the farm-houses the master of the house may still be seen at the head of a long table, with his farm servants sitting down to their meals as part of the family. Rush candles are yet employed in common, "white or tallow candles being reserved," as with Walker, "for important occasions." And we imagine tea is even now very little used, except by the more wealthy farmers, at whose houses indeed we have seen it. Neither Walker nor his wife ever partook of it, though they kept it in the house for visitors or such of their own family as had been accustomed to this refreshment elsewhere. Porridge was their substitute, and it is still employed at the meals answering to breakfast and tea. At the public-house at Seathwaite, the landlord of which is also a farmer, this

* 'Colloquies,' i., 368.

is the case, and we were somewhat amused, after we had finished our tea, to see the tea-pot very quietly taken to the landlord, and tea made for him alone, from the tea-leaves which had just served us. When the master of the house happened at such times to be from home, his mother (he had no wife), an old but vigorous dame, appropriated the luxury to her own use.

There are few places in our country perhaps that have changed so little as has Seathwaite since Walker's time; there have been no new buildings, nor has anything altered the external look of the place, unless it be the addition of the public-house, and that is an old farm-house. Walker's own house has been enlarged since his death, but only so much as to render it somewhat more convenient to his successor. Nor have the inhabitants greatly changed; they are still the same frugal, industrious, quiet, church-going race: there is indeed a slight change in the last item. Walker congratulates himself that there is "not one dissenter of any denomination in the parish," and now there are several Methodists, and two or three Baptists, who have occasional meetings at private houses, for there is still no dissenting meeting-house in Seathwaite; but the chief part of the inhabitants are still steady churchmen.

The chapel in which Walker so long officiated is a simple structure, a low oblong building with a plain porch, and one bell, hung visibly in a most primitive-looking belfry, with the bell-rope hanging down on the outside. It differs little in its appearance from many other chapels scattered throughout the more retired parts of the locality; it is not, however, so small as many of them, that

at Wasdale Head for instance, which has seven pews, one being for each of the six families in the chapelry, and the remaining one for strangers. Seathwaite churchyard contains a fine old yew, and near it a sun-dial, by which is Walker's grave-stone, a plain blue slab, shown in the engraving: upon it is the following inscription:—

"In memory of the Reverend Robert Walker, who died the 25th day of June, 1802, in the 93rd year of his age, and 67th of his curacy at Seathwaite.

"Also of Anne, his wife, who died the 28th of January, 1802, in the 93rd year of her age."

The only noticeable thing in the interior of the chapel is Walker's pew, which is still lined with cloth woven by his own hand—it is the only pew in the chapel so distinguished. There is about Seathwaite chapel an air of antique rudeness, that at once carries the mind back to a by-gone age; it speaks as strongly of other times as the noblest minster—but how differently! We advise the visitor, if he can, to spend a Sunday there. Few sights would be more interesting to one not thoroughly sophisticated than the old kirk-yard on a Sabbath morning. *Then* the old kirk—the noble yew, older still than the kirk, with the sun-dial by it—the few grave-stones scattered about, and the everlasting hills—which form so noble a background to the whole—all seem to wear an air of deeper repose and more silent grandeur than ever. But presently the bell tolls, and its first sounds have hardly passed away when one and another of the dalesmen come quietly in, giving and receiving a simple greeting, and then separating into little groups, or loitering singly

about the graves, apparently recalling, many of them at least, the memory of those who sleep below, while others collect under the shade of the old yew; the fairer portion of the congregation meantime resting on the benches within the porch, but none, at least in fine weather, enter the chapel. Soon, however, as the bell's last stroke has sounded, the clergyman, a happy-looking old man—apparently no unworthy successor of Walker—may be seen making his way towards the kirk, exchanging with all a smile, a word, or a bow of genuine old-fashioned courtesy (and the stranger will be sure to receive one more marked than others), and after a little longer talk with his fair parishioners in the porch, he enters the chapel, followed by his charge. We saw them thus gathering, one calm sunny sabbath-morn, from the dales and the fells, and it recurs to our memory as the most beautiful sight of the kind we ever beheld.

"Upon the Seathwaite Brook," says Wordsworth, "at a small distance from the parsonage, has been erected a mill for spinning yarn; it is a mean and disagreeable object, though not unimportant to the spectator, as calling to mind the momentous changes wrought by such inventions in the frame of society." We went to look at the mill, and found it with its roof partly fallen in, its wheel broken; and on trying the door, its hinges, rusted from long disuse, gave way. The machinery, too, though in appearance undisturbed since it was last used, was decayed, the web crumbling at the slightest touch. Our poet, were he to visit it now, might find new matter for reflection on the changes wrought by the progress of invention, which has rendered this as obsolete as it made unaided hand-labour.

Before leaving Seathwaite, the tourist should not fail to visit the station Wordsworth has pointed out in his 'Notes,' for the sake of the view he so beautifully describes. The reader who may not have his work at hand, will thank us for quoting the whole passage, hardly equalled, we think, by any descriptive piece in modern prose. He is speaking of the way of approach to the Duddon: —"After all, the traveller would be most gratified who should approach this beautiful stream neither at its source, as is done in the sonnets, nor from its termination, but from Coniston, over Walna-scar; first descending into a little circular valley, a collateral compartment of the long winding vale through which flows the Duddon. This recess, towards the close of September, when the after-grass of the meadows is still of a fresh green, with the leaves of many of the trees faded, but perhaps none fallen, is truly enchanting. At a point elevated enough to show the various objects in the valley, and not so high as to diminish their importance, the stranger will instinctively halt. On the foreground, a little below the most favourable station, a rude foot-bridge is thrown over the bed of the noisy brook foaming by the wayside. Russet and craggy hills, of bold and varied outline, surround the level valley, which is besprinkled with grey rocks plumed with birch-trees. A few homesteads are interspersed, in some places peeping out from among the rocks like hermitages, whose site has been chosen for the benefit of sunshine, as well as shelter; in other instances, the dwelling-house, barn, and byre compose together a cruciform structure, which, with its embowering trees, and the ivy clothing part of the walls and

[On the Duddon at Seathwaite.]

roof like a fleece, call to mind the remains of an ancient abbey. Time, in most cases, and nature everywhere, have given a sanctity to the humble works of man that are scattered over this peaceful retirement. Hence a harmony of tone and colour, a consummation and perfection of beauty, which would have been marred had aim or purpose interfered with the course of convenience, utility, or necessity. This unvitiated region stands in no need of the veil of twilight to soften or disguise its features. As it glistens in the morning sunshine, it would fill the spectator's heart with gladsomeness. Looking from our chosen station, he would feel an impatience to rove among its pathways, to be greeted by the milk-maid, to wander from house to house, exchanging 'good-morrows' as he passed the open doors; but at evening, when the sun is set, and a pearly light gleams from the western quarter of the sky, with an answering light from the smooth surface of the meadows; when the trees are dusky, but each kind still distinguishable; when the cool air has condensed the blue smoke rising from the chimneys; when the dark mossy stones seem to sleep in the bed of the foaming brook; *then* he would be unwilling to move forward, not less from a reluctance to relinquish what he beholds, than from an apprehension of disturbing, by his approach, the quietness beneath him."

This 'Station' will be found without difficulty by those who have descended from the source of the Duddon. You cross the vale from Seathwaite by Seathwaite brook, having Under-crag on your left, and, *ascending* Walna-scar, the proper position will be readily found by the preceding descrip-

tion, which is as accurate as it is beautiful. In returning we may follow the streamlet here spoken of, which dashes in a sparkling current past the churchyard of Seathwaite, till it joins the river in the midst of the wild and beautiful scenery which gave occasion to the Sonnets from the fourteenth to the twentieth, inclusive. This is unquestionably the grandest part of the scenery of the Duddon. The river here makes its way between steep and lofty crags of bold and imposing aspect; and as the course of the stream is very tortuous, strange and striking combinations of forms, with wild and varied effects of light and shade, occur at every step. The rock is a friable kind, and shattered in every direction; large masses have fallen from the heights on either hand, and others impend in a threatening manner. "The *chaotic* aspect of the scene is well marked by the expression of a stranger, who strolled out while dinner was preparing, and at his return being asked what way he had been wandering, replied, 'As far as it is finished.'" (Wordsworth.)

The best way to explore the scenery here, if the traveller does not mind a little rough climbing, is to get into the bed of the river by the brook, and proceed along it, under Walla-barrow crag, as far as he can towards the source. He must make his way over huge fragments of rock that in some places appear to entirely block up the bed of the river, the water forcing itself under and between them in such a manner as to be unseen at a little distance; and in others are so disposed as to produce the singular variety of sparkling waterbreaks that occur here in little more than half a mile. It

[Duddon Sands.]

is rather a rough way, and the visitor may perchance get wet feet; but if he confine himself to what he can see from the crags above, he will miss his only chance of seeing some scenery seldom to be matched for a grandeur nearly allied to sublimity. A great beauty in these mountain-streams is, that a few yards will present you with an almost entire change of landscape; here it is remarkably the case: one moment bare rude rock towers up against the deep blue sky, the water dashes along in a shallow brawling stream, while the broken outline of a mountain-pile bounds the distance; the next we are shut in by light and graceful trees, the varying hues of the birch, ash, and hazel blending in exquisite harmony, and imaging themselves in a still pool, over whose surface a crowd of merry insects ceaselessly gambol, their gentle hum but adding to the deep feeling of quietude. Here, in this little space of some half a mile perhaps, might the painter find almost a month's employment in making *studies* of rock and foliage mingling their various tints with the underwood and ever-changing water. But we have lingered too long. Retracing our steps, we again proceed towards our journey's end. Though our river, after we have passed the Seathwaite brook, flows along a more level country, and is unmarked by any of the grander or more striking features on which we have hitherto dwelt, the way is very beautiful.

> "Through delicious meads
> The murmuring stream its winding water leads;"

light foliage with flowers of every hue grace its banks; the rugged features of the crags have become softened by distance; the fields are alive with cattle; and grey cottages chequer every spot of

rising ground;—we have exchanged our Salvator-like scenery for such as our own Holland most delighted in.

The next place of any consequence, after leaving Seathwaite, is Ulpha (pronounced Oopha by the dalesmen). Before reaching it we come upon a singular assemblage of rocks that might have suggested the idea of Wordsworth's twelfth sonnet, though we believe it is intended to describe those by Seathwaite, of which we have already spoken. These are very singular: they project but little above the surface of the water, but are riven into the most fanciful forms, over and through and between which the river makes its way in a number of sparkling waterbreaks of varied sizes and height. We point the visitor's attention to this spot, not only for its singularity, but that he may also notice the rock itself. A fine red porphyritic dyke here crosses the channel of the river, contrasting finely with the light limestone with which it is in conjunction; it is, of course, owing to the greater hardness of this dyke that it projects so much above the level of the neighbouring rock, and that the irregular appearance here spoken of is produced.* The whole course of the river, from Seathwaite to Ulpha, is exceedingly picturesque; the views are more open and extended than heretofore, and the distant mountains are of pleasing, often graceful forms, both alone and in combination: Broughton Tower, too, as seen in many places, is a pleasing addition to the landscape. As

* We may mention that, though we have not referred to the geological features of our route, there is much in it to interest the geologist; nor need the botanist fear that he will lack employment.

we approach Ulpha, its chapel forms an interesting landmark. Wordsworth says:—

"The kirk of Ulpha to the pilgrim's eye
Is welcome as a star that doth present
Its shining forehead through the peaceful rent
Of a black cloud diffused through half the sky."
Sonnet XXXI.

It is situated on a high bank, and commands a fine view. We might well wander awhile in the churchyard, "soothed by the unseen river's gentle roar, from pastoral graves extracting thoughts divine." Walker was offered the curacy of Ulpha, but declined holding it along with his own, lest it should be attributed to covetousness in him, his own living at that time (1755) being worth 15*l. per annum!* At Ulpha there is a public-house (known as Ulpha Kirk-house), in which the traveller will meet with better accommodation than at Seathwaite, but the scenery is not so fine, nor does it divide the distance so well.

From Ulpha the river widens, but becomes tamer and less romantic; it will, indeed, hardly repay the trouble of following its windings, especially as the ground on each side is enclosed. It must, however, be joined again by Broughton or sooner, for—

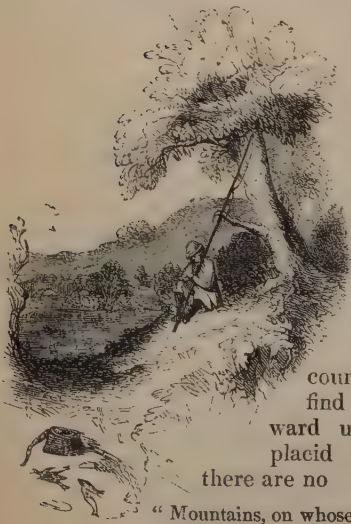
"*now* expands
Majestic Duddon over smooth flat sands,
Gliding in silence with unfettered sweep!
Beneath an ampler sky a region wide
Is opened round him: hamlets, towers, and towns,
And blue-topped hills, behold him from afar."
Sonnet XXXII.

Our great guide here likens him to—

"Sovereign Thames,
Spreading his bosom under Kentish downs;"

but, it must be confessed, it requires all fancy's help to sustain the resemblance. Still it is a noble sight, when the full tide has laid the whole stretch of sand, a mile and a half across, under water, to gaze from some elevated spot over it as it mingles its waters with the mighty ocean, the setting sun meantime blending all into a glow of golden splendour, while thousands of waterfowl, darting in every direction with the swiftness almost of the lightning, and baffling the keenest eye to follow their rapid evolutions, impart an air of liveliness to a scene that might else perhaps be too sombre from its uniformity.

THE MOLE, SURREY.



S contrast is one of the charms of the picturesque, we turn from the mountain stream of the north to a quiet pastoral river, not far from the busiest spot in the world. There is so much that is beautiful in our home counties, that we shall find sufficient to reward us even in their placid scenery. True, there are no

"Mountains, on whose barren breast
The lab'ring clouds do often rest,"

nor mountain-torrents, nor rushing waterfalls, nor many other such mighty things; but there are

> " Russet lawns and fallows gray,
> Where the nibbling flocks do stray ;
> Meadows trim, with daisies pied ;
> Shallow brooks, and rivers wide ;"

to say nothing of our woodland scenes, with their " shadows brown that Sylvan loves :" in a word, there are most of the amenities, if there be few of the sublimities of nature. And then there are the places where our great men, " better none," have dwelt, or by the power of their genius rendered memorable.

It has been often remarked that the various picturesque features of a country are seen to most advantage in their diversified combinations by following the windings of some of its principal rivers ; and there is much truth in the observation, especially if the higher grounds on either side of the river be occasionally ascended. Indeed, the remark may be taken in a more general sense, for it is almost equally true of the economic features of a district ; the more important towns and villages being ordinarily situated along the banks or in the near vicinity of a river ; so that, if it be not too literally observed, it would hardly be too much to consider that a fair knowledge of the leading characteristics of a district may be readiest obtained in some such manner.

Let us now take a bright spring morning, and see whether we cannot find in a ramble down the Mole enough to repay us for the time we devote to it : not that we intend, however, to tie ourselves strictly to its banks ;

> " we 'll loosely wear the chain
> That binds us, pleasant river, to thy side."

Surrey is not famous for its rivers: the Mole and the Wey, which are the principal, both have their source in other counties. The Mole rises in Sussex, but is of little importance till it enters Surrey. It has been said to derive its name from its burrowing propensities; but of these we shall speak when we reach the spot where it has been said to dig its way: it more likely received its name from its extremely tortuous course, which may have been thought to bear some resemblance to that of a mole. It is no dashing stream, like those of the mountain districts; it is rather quiet, sober, and contemplative: it has been called "sullen" and "silent" by the poets—for poets have sung of it; indeed, we are about to make the acquaintance of no commonplace river, but one that has been honoured by the muse of Milton, Drayton, Pope, Thomson, and many of lesser fame: mentioned by grave writers, and altogether is of name in the world; though it must be admitted that its fame has been acquired—as happens sometimes with men as well as rivers—by the supposed possession of qualities that do not belong to it. Yet, whether deserved or not, its fame has given it a standing that makes all who approach it do so with an unusual degree of respect. Even Manning, in his huge 'History of Surrey,' ventures a little beyond his usual style when he comes to speak of its source. "It is almost as difficult," he tells us, "to say which is the head of the Mole, as it is of the Nile." We shall not attempt to solve this difficulty, but content ourselves with saying that the Mole is formed by the union of several small streams that rise on the borders of Sussex. The main branch appears to be that which has its

source at Rusper, about two miles from Horsham Common, and enters Surrey at Charlwood, a little below which it is joined by another stream that rises in Tilgate Forest, Sussex. But although the Mole has its source in Sussex, it is a most insignificant stream for some distance after it has left that county. It belongs to Surrey, and, with the exception of the Wey (to which and to its associations we intend soon to introduce our readers), is the only river of importance it contains.

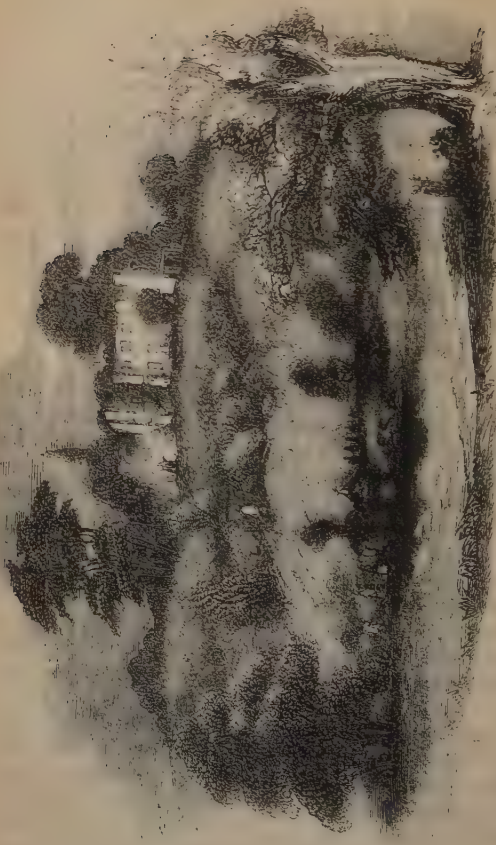
There is little in the first few miles of its course that is remarkable: at Horley it turns a mill, and begins to look a little like a river: Horley church, past which it flows, like many of the Surrey churches, is an interesting building. A mile or two farther on it is joined by another stream from Worth in Sussex, and soon after by a very beautiful one which issues from the foot of the hill near Merstham church in Surrey. Thus strengthened, it leaves the clean dull town of Reigate on the north, and pursues its wild way towards the Thames. The rambler who may be tempted to follow its windings, may conveniently join it either at Reigate or at Horley; there being a station at each of these places on the Brighton railway. At Reigate there is also a station belonging to the South-eastern Railway, which turns off at that place to Dover. There is little in Reigate to detain the casual visitor—of its castle nothing now remains; the Baron's Cave, as it is called, may indeed be just worth looking into; and there is a pretty park. The town has that listless look so common now in towns that depended much on posting and coach traffic, and which have been destroyed by the proximity of a railway. Those who knew it a dozen

years ago will be glad to escape from the melancholy its present dullness generates.

Let us then bend our steps down again to our river; and we need not fear but the cheerful aspect of those broad meadows, the clear waters reflecting so gaily the bright glance of the sun, and the glad notes of the skylarks, will effectually dissipate any obtrusive thoughts. There is a quiet cheerful look about the place we have now reached—a sort of Cuyp-like quiet—that is very pleasant. The banks of the river are low, and farm-houses and cottages, with a few tenements of a somewhat more ambitious character, are distributed about the valley, or formed into little straggling hamlets, each with its rustic church and lofty trees, while here and there a water-mill gives an appearance of life to the whole, and by its sound affords an agreeable relief to the ear. Following our river, we soon arrive at Leigh, where is a farm-house known as Swain's, in which there is a tradition that Ben Jonson once resided; and a room is still called his study. The Mole is apt in winter to overflow these parts, and at such times the fords, of which there are several, are impassable. Posts are fixed at some of them, marked with a scale of feet, by the height of the water up which the traveller is guided. Perhaps some of our readers are acquainted with Bewick's engravings; if they have seen them, they will not [illegible] forgotten the "tail-pieces" with which he has so [illegible]ly adorned his works on natural history—[illegible]scenery, rustic adventures, scraps of all [illegible]ve of rural life: to those who know [illegible]ive no better idea of the character of [illegible]his neighbourhood, than that it re[illegible]y half-dozen steps, of some of them.

Wonum (or Wonham), along whose grounds our river runs, presents some charming diversities of scene; indeed we here, perhaps for the first time, catch a fair view of the Mole's real character. The park has some fine trees, and the house is an important object. But with a passing glance at these, and at Moor Place, which looks as if it deserved a closer inspection, we proceed, for much lies before us. There is a fine aristocratic appearance about Brockham, the next place we need notice; and the park has many of those features that make English park-scenery always so interesting. But if we intend to keep beside our stream, it must be at a venture, for see! here is a ditch both broad and deep to be got over, and there a notice—"Whoever trespasses in these woods will be prosecuted." Let the rambler choose his own way; whether through the wood and across the fields, or around and by the road, either is pleasant; and either will bring him out by Brockham-green, where the prudent pedestrian will do well to avail himself of the hospitality of the civil landlady of the Royal Oak, who will presently dress him something such as it is hard if he has not gained an appetite to relish, and give him "some barley wine," as old Izaak Walton has it, "the good liquor our honest forefathers did use to drink of; the drink which preserved their health, and made them live so long, and do so many good deeds."

We must not stay long though. Betchworth Park is before us, and a stroll through that would repay our journey. The Mole is now a river of respectable size, and exceedingly picturesque. In the park is a large number of stately trees, oaks, elms, walnuts, and beeches; the river runs through



[Betchworth Castle.]

it, and Box Hill towers on our right. Betchworth Park is, we think, in many respects the most beautiful of any within a like distance from London. Soon after we enter it from Brockham we see before us the ruins of Betchworth Castle, as shown in the preceding page. They are raised some height above the river, on a mound whose side is covered with a young plantation. The ruins are picturesque, and the grey walls, contrasted with the rich tone of the ivy that has crept over a good part of them, stand out finely against the deep blue sky. But those who associate with the phrase "ruined castle" the idea of such fabrics as may be found in our border counties, will be disappointed here. Betchworth Castle is really a mansion, not at all warlike in its appearance, that has apparently fallen into ruin as much through neglect as time and violence; and there is little in its history that is more exciting than may be found in the records of the transfers of estates as families decay or tastes change. Yet, as there are not many ruins in Surrey, this is not to be despised; every care appears to be taken by its present proprietors to prolong its existence.

The Mole in its course through the park is half concealed in many places by the dense foliage on its banks, chiefly of a profusion of alders with fantastic roots and curiously intertwisted branches, while it is further diversified with an abundance of little islets, miniatures of the aits so familiar on the Thames. There is many a spot along here that is perfectly tantalizing to the angler who cannot stay to cast a line. What fine carp must lie under those old roots! what chub too may! and we happen to know that both here and in the mill-

pond just outside the boundary of the park they used to be in plenty, and not small either. Hofland, in his 'Angler's Manual,' says the Mole is too slow a river to furnish trout: we think he might have found a few hereabouts; and at Leatherhead some as fine as ever turned up a side in his favourite Hampshire Stour or Ullswater Lake.

After quitting Betchworth the pedestrian will take the path by the mill to Dorking; or he may, if he please, step aside a little to Deepden, where is a fine house with some good pictures, and around it many walks such as it is a pity to lose. Dorking is a long, neat, and quiet town, famous for its poultry, butter, and other good things; and if we had time, and this were the place to describe it, would be worth a more careful survey. We believe it is quite unmatched, for the number and variety of pleasant rambles it offers, by any other town within the same distance of London. Such walks, for instance, as those about Deepden, of which we have spoken; along the top of the fine range of downs towards Guildford; Leith Hill, the stroll towards which is very agreeable, while the view from its summit is, on a clear day, a treat of no ordinary kind; the vale of Mickelham, along which we shall wander presently; and then there is Wotton, the birth-place and, for the last years of his life, the residence of the excellent John Evelyn, in allusion to whose 'Sylva, or a Discourse of Forest-Trees,' it has been said, by D'Israeli, "The present navy of Great Britain has been constructed with the oaks which the genius of Evelyn planted." Nor will this appear hyperbolical, if we notice what he says in the dedication of one of the later editions to Charles II.:—"I need not ac-

quaint your Majesty how many millions of timber-trees, besides infinite others, have been propagated and planted throughout your vast dominions at the instigation and by the sole direction of this work, because your Majesty has been pleased to own it publicly for my encouragement." The discourse was written in answer to certain inquiries sent by the Commissioners of the Navy to the Royal Society, and was the first book printed by order of that society. It is filled with learning, for Evelyn was enthusiastically attached to his subject, and had been for years in the habit of collecting everything he met with in his reading that could do honour to his favourite trees. But though there is an air of pedantry and something of formality about it, the book is an agreeable one to read, and has not yet lost its value as a guide to the forester. Evelyn was a model of an English gentleman of that period, and though connected with the court of the profligate Charles II., he retained to the last uninjured the manly virtues of his character. His 'Diary,' first published about twenty-five years ago, is exceedingly interesting as a picture of the manners of his time, and it exhibits his many excellences in an unobtrusive manner. Though attached in no ordinary degree to a country life, he was active in his duties as a citizen: indeed his conduct during the Great Plague might almost be called heroic. Upon the declaration of war with the Dutch, Charles appointed Evelyn a commissioner for taking care of the sick and wounded and prisoners arising therefrom. A short time before the appearance of the plague in London, Evelyn's charge had been removed to the Savoy; and during that fearful visi-

tation neither the entreaties of his friends nor his own danger could induce him to quit the scene of his duties. But having sent his wife and family to Wotton, he determined to stay himself, trusting, as he says, "in the providence and goodness of God." The anxiety his situation must have produced was increased to a most painful extent by the court having neglected at this trying time to furnish him with the necessary funds to relieve the miseries of his charge. "One fortnight," he says, in a letter written at this time, "has made me feel the utmost of miseries that can befall a person in my station and with my affections. To have twenty-five thousand prisoners and fifteen hundred sick and wounded men to take care of, without one penny of money, and above 2000*l.* indebted." "Our prisoners beg of us as a mercy to knock them on the head, for we have no bread to relieve the dying creatures. I beseech your honour let us not be reputed barbarians." At another time he says he and Sir William D'Oily have lost all their "servants, officers, and most necessary attendants, and have nothing left us to expose but our persons, which are every moment at the mercy of a raging pestilence." He was in London too during the Great Fire which followed the pestilence, and his letters give the most vivid description of it perhaps extant. Evelyn was the friend of Jeremy Taylor and of Cowley, the latter of whom addressed his 'Garden' to him. Evelyn was greatly attached to gardens and gardening, and had written much on the subject. Cowley addresses him in that felicitous prose none else ever wrote so well: "I know nobody that possesses more private happiness than you do in your garden:

and yet no man who makes his happiness more public by a free communication of it to others. All that I myself am able yet to do, is only to recommend to mankind the search of that felicity, which you instruct them how to find and to enjoy:

> 'Happy art thou whom God does bless,
> With the full choice of thine own happiness.'"

Evelyn's wife was a very superior woman; his Diary bears abundant testimony to her many excellences. Cowley makes a pleasant allusion to her in the lines succeeding those above quoted: he reminds his friend that in his "virtuous wife" he has "pleasures more refined and sweet;

> 'The fairest garden in her looks,
> And in her mind the wisest books.'"

There is a homely companionable vein in our older writers, quite delightful to meet with. But we have talked so long of Evelyn, we cannot stay to describe the house. Both it and the grounds possess many relics of its celebrated possessor.

Before we leave the neighbourhood of Dorking we must ascend its boasted eminence, Box Hill; so named from the number of box-trees that grow upon it: in old maps it is marked White Hill. Some years ago, the box-trees then growing upon it were nearly all cut down, but there is a goodly plantation of them there now, and they appear very flourishing. The view from its summit is a most extensive one, there being little to interrupt it in any direction. You may trace the course of the Mole for miles from it. Over the downs towards Croydon is a rich and pleasing prospect;

that on the south towards Sussex is more varied, and from the greater quantity of wood perhaps more attractive ; while on the south-west Dorking lies at your feet, stretching away towards the wide valley formed by the Guildford downs and the range of hills of which Leith Hill is the most prominent. Sheltered by these hills and with the rich valley behind it, its appearance is unusually beautiful, as it is seen through the softening haze of the mid-day sun. As evening draws on, and the hills deepen into gloom, while the light blue smoke ascending from a thousand chimneys half conceals the town, and the sun is slowly sinking behind and gilding the ridge of distant hills, it is more sombre, but takes a firmer hold on the mind.

In the outset of our account we said that the Mole had received many notices from the poets for a quality it was only imagined to possess. We alluded to the fabulous account of its sinking into the earth and re-appearing some miles farther on : as it was at the foot of Box Hill it was said to disappear, this seems to be the proper place to notice it. Camden says, "The Mole coming to White (*i.e.* Box) Hill hides itself, or is rather swallowed up, at the foot of the hill there ; and for that reason the place is called the Swallow : but about two miles below it bubbles up and rises again ; so that the inhabitants of this tract, no less than the Spaniards, may boast of having a bridge that feeds several flocks of sheep." Izaak Walton, who overlooked little that had been said about rivers, quotes this with some relish, and it is repeated by most of our older writers who have occasion to mention the Mole. Nor was the error soon removed from our descriptive works. We find it in Chamberlayne's

'Present State of Great Britain,' 1743. As might be expected, the poets gladly availed themselves of so poetical a circumstance; thus Milton, in one of his juvenile poems (that entitled "At a Vacation Exercise in the College"), speaks of the

> "Sullen Mole, that runneth underneath:"

a line which Pope evidently copied in his "Windsor Forest" (and D'Israeli might have given it a place among his "Poetical Imitations")—he calls it the

> "Sullen Mole, that hides his diving flood."

Drayton, in that curious rhyming repertory of out-of-the-way local information, the 'Poly-Olbion' (Song 17, p. 265, &c., ed. 1622), has given a very fanciful account of the matter. He is describing the course of the Thames, and when he has brought him to Hampton, he says—

> "'Gainst Hampton-court he meets the soft and gentle Mole,"

and is a little inclined to dally awhile with her, which Thame and Isis, the parents of Thames, see with some displeasure, as they are anxious for him to hasten on to unite with Medway:—

> "But Tames would hardly on; oft turning back, to show
> From his much-loved Mole how loth he was to go.
> The Mother of the Mole, old Holmesdale, likewise beares
> The affection of her childe as ill as they do theirs."

She accordingly tries various ways to prevent their meeting; but Mole is not to be easily stayed; and at length

> "Old Holmesdale raised hills to keep the straggler in,
> That of her daughter's stay she need no more to doubt
> (Yet never was there help, but love could find it out).,

Mole digs herself a path, by working day and night
(According to her name, to show her nature right).
And underneath the earth for three miles' space doth
creep."

Yet, after all, Thames is forced on; although we are glad to find, a little lower, that something like poetical justice is rendered to our Mole: for when

"Tames did understand what pains the Mole did take"

for his behoof, he showed his sympathy, and in some measure endeavoured to requite her attachment; for

"Up towards the place, where first his much-loved Mole
was seen,
He ever since doth flow towards delightful Sheen."

In a note to his account of the disappearance of the Mole, Drayton (or rather *Selden*, for the notes were written by him) says, "The Mole runs into the earth about a mile from Darking in Surrey, and after some two miles sees the light again, which to be certain hath been affirmed by inhabitants thereabout reporting." And then proceeds to show by plenteous classical citations, that there are rivers in Greece and Sicily which flow underground in a similar manner. De Foe, in his 'Tour through Great Britain,' is said by Bray to have first pointed out the error of Camden. But he was wrong in denying the statement entirely; it seldom happens that these accounts, however exaggerated, are altogether without foundation. The statement of Mr. Bray, the editor of Manning's 'History of Surrey' (in vol. ii., pp. 649–666, &c. of that work), is to the effect that the Mole does not disappear at once and then burst forth at once; but in a dry summer, in various places between Burford-bridge, in Mickelham, and Thorncroft-bridge, it is absorbed and lost in the porous bed through which it

runs, leaving in many places the naked gravel and in others forming a stagnant pool. Mr. Bray says he has often seen it dry at Burford-bridge, though in floods the river has nearly run over the bridge. There is no reason to suppose that it forms an underground current; there is, however, a spring by Thorncroft-bridge, at a small distance from the river, from which a constant stream issues and runs into it; there are also two hollows in Burford Park, in the bottom of which the current of the Mole may, it is said, be traced. A careful plan of the Mole from Box Hill to Leatherhead is given by Mr. Bray, in which the parts that become dry are shown, and the "Swallows," between these places marked. A little below the places which become dry, other streams run into the bed of the river, and it appears to flow on as usual: these circumstances combined, no doubt gave rise to the report. There is some interest in tracing these "vulgar errors," and we hope our readers will not think we have dwelt too long on this.

Leaving Box Hill on our right, we soon reach Burford-bridge, of which mention is made above. The vale here is called Mickelham, and is one of the loveliest anywhere to be found. It would indeed be no easy thing to select a more beautiful ramble than that by the side of the Mole as it winds through this valley. The downs are close on either hand, and, although of no great height, afford prettily varied slopes, and are more wooded than the downs usually are. All along the valley there is a pleasing admixture of soft swelling downs and cultivated land, parks with magnificent trees and lordly mansions, happy-looking country-houses, so snugly wrapped up in their coatings of evergreens,

yet so gay in their heaps of brilliant flowers, with one or two antique though rural churches, and many a picturesque cluster of cottages. Mr. Sharp (Conversation Sharp, as he is called) had a "Retreat" in Mickelham, and many a gathering of the most gifted men of the age occurred within its walls. Sir James Mackintosh, as we are informed in his Memoirs, used often, when in India, to speak with great delight of this, "The Happy Valley," as he was accustomed to designate it. Norbury Park, the seat of Mr. W. Lock, the friend of Fuseli, so often referred to in Fuseli's Life, is in Mickelham. The Mole flows through its beautiful grounds: the house is a fine structure: its walls were painted by Barrett, the successful rival, in the estimation of his contemporaries, of Wilson, with views chiefly of the Lakes, but which appear to harmonize with the natural scenery by which they are surrounded. In the Park is an abundance of fine timber: formerly there is said to have been so many walnut-trees on the estate as to have produced 100*l.* at a tything of 4*d.* a tree. They were nearly all cut down, however, by a Mr. Chapman, when he purchased the estate. Mickelham church is evidently of great antiquity: it has a large square tower with double buttresses at the corners; at one side of the tower is a window with a round-headed arch with dentals, and in the body of the church are some others of curious form: but it is to be regretted that, at some reparation of the edifice, they have been so altered and painted, that it is not easy to tell how much of them is genuine. There are several interesting monuments about the church, and, altogether, it will repay examination. A little farther on, a neat school has just been erected on

the hill-side; it is designed with a happy feeling (as an artist would say) for the capabilities of the situation, and will not fail to remind the traveller of the secluded kirk-houses on the fell-sides in the northern counties.

Although the Mole here runs pretty much through private grounds, it may be followed by the pedestrian, and is so beautiful all the way to Leatherhead, that it should not be left, or only to look at some places that may be passed. Here, as in Betchworth Park, it has many little islets; and the river, altogether, will recall the Thames in its pleasanter parts to the memory.

After leaving Norbury Park, we soon reach Thorncroft, and shortly descry the lofty tower of Leatherhead Church, with the irregular roofs of the town beyond it. Leatherhead Church is an ancient structure, having been rebuilt about 1346, when the present tower was added. It bears evident marks of having been built at various periods, being formed partly of brick, partly of a sandstone that is fast decaying, and partly of flints and rubble. It has a variety of projecting roofs and porches, that have been added to the original edifice as convenience rather than design suggested; the effect, however, is not the less picturesque for the absence of formality. The whole was modernized in 1701. The interior is very neat and clean in its appearance. It abounds with noticeable monuments both within and without.

Leatherhead is a quiet town; little appears to disturb it—the ostler at the Swan seems the only person moved even by the stage as it passes through its long street. It is situated on very irregular ground, and has therefore less stiffness than many

[Leatherhead Church.]

country towns. It is a very old place, being mentioned in Domesday-Book; yet although it bears evident traces of antiquity, there is little in it to attract attention—nor are there any buildings of historical interest, unless the Mansion-house in South-street may be said to possess it, which has the somewhat unenviable distinction of having been the residence of Judge Jeffries. His daughter died here; her burial is recorded in the parish register to have taken place on Dec. 2nd, 1688. But even Jeffries's house is not in its original condition: it was rebuilt in 1710. There is a public-house near the bridge that is supposed to be the same whose alewife is celebrated by the poet Skelton. The Mole at Leatherhead spreads out to a considerable width, and is crossed by an excellent bridge of fourteen arches, seven of them being in Fetcham parish. Leatherhead trout are very famous, and the traveller who wishes to test their excellence may, if he be a brother of the angle, throw a line here—or mine hostess of the Swan will, in the proper season, supply those who may prefer the fish without the labour.

From Leatherhead there is a by-road over Platsome Green, keeping the river a little on the left, to Stoke d'Abernon; and there is another leaving the river on the right across a corner of Fetcham Common: they meet at Stoke by the old watermill; both are pleasant—indeed, in that respect, there is little to choose between them. Our river we must no longer expect to follow closely; its way, during most of the remainder of its course, lying through private enclosures.

We ought to have mentioned sooner that the banks of our river are everywhere adorned with a

profusion of flowers; and in spring abound to a remarkable degree with cowslips, a flower that is found in unusual plenty throughout Surrey. Nor must we omit to notice, that in many of the villages a graceful May-day custom prevails connected therewith. During the last few days of April, the village children go about the meadows, and collecting all the cowslips they can find, form them into garlands, chaplets, &c., and on May-morning they assemble, and uniting in bands, carry their garlands, arranged commonly on two hoops crossed vertically and fixed on poles, about the neighbourhood; and very pretty they look. They have nosegays of other flowers also, but cowslips (or paigles, as they call them) are the chief; and with these their bonnets and caps are also trimmed. We have seen some of these little processions that looked as charming as those troops of Italian children carrying flowers, which Mr. Uwins paints so delightfully. We have not seen this Surrey custom noticed anywhere; in Hone's 'Every-day Book' there is an account of one something similar in the neighbourhood of Northampton. We do not know whether the practice is falling off, but it is not extinct—last May-day we saw many of these little companies at as short a distance from London as Carshalton and Beddington; certainly there is no other relic of May-day near London of anything like so graceful a form. The cottages to are for the nonce decorated with similar ornaments.

Stoke church is one of those little churches situated within a park, of which there are so many in every county, and which always have so stiff and lordly, and exclusive a look. It stands by the river-side, and is a neat little building. The village

consists merely of a few scattered houses. At Stoke we part from the downs by which the scenery has hitherto been so agreeably diversified. Our river now runs by Cobham Park, soon after quitting which it works another of those picturesque water-mills of which we have already passed so many along its banks. As this is the last we shall meet with deserving regard, we give an engraving of it below.

[Mill at Cobham.]

Cobham is quite a model of a sequestered country hamlet, and must be very refreshing in its quietness to the many anglers who escape to it from the noise of London. It contains some good houses,

and, altogether, has a *weighty* look. In the churchyard there is a noble yew-tree, hollow from age, but still vigorous, and of large size. Cobham proper lies away from the great Portsmouth road, which runs through a sort of offset from Cobham, called Cobham-street;—a place that, prior to the opening of the South-western Railway, had a lively bustling appearance, very different from that it now wears. The Mole about Cobham, as we have hinted, is much frequented by anglers, and has a promising look to a practised eye. Two bridges here cross it: the original bridge at Cobham was erected by Matilda, queen of Henry I., who assigned a piece of land in Cobham for its support. The cause of its erection was somewhat remarkable and characteristic of the age. One of her maidens being drowned in attempting to cross the ford here, the queen caused a bridge to be erected over the place *for the repose of her soul.* It lasted till 1782, when it was removed, being too small for the increased traffic. Matilda appears to have had an inclination for bridge-making, as, in addition to this at Cobham, the old one across the Lea at Stratford-le-Bow (which remained till within the last five or six years), and, we believe, one or two others, were erected by her.

Passing through Cobham-street, a by-road may be taken which will afford us frequent glimpses of our companion, although we can now no longer keep close beside it. The road is an agreeable one, and by Southwood we may join the river again, and proceed without much hindrance along its banks until we reach Esher Place. There is, however, another pleasant way by which, although we must part from our river awhile, we may still

avoid the high road. This is, to take a road near Cobham mill, or one by the church, and thence by Fair-mile farm, and across Esher Common to Claremont. This shall be our course:—

> "A common overgrown with fern, and rough
> With prickly gorse, that shapeless and deform'd,
> And dangerous to the touch, has yet its bloom,
> And decks itself with ornaments of gold,
> Yields no unpleasing ramble,"

says Cowper: and to us there is always something exhilarating in the fresh breezy air of an English common, with its strings of rosy-cheeked, ragged children; its flocks of noisy geese; its two or three scraggy horses and scrubby donkeys; its tall furze bushes, with their rich golden garniture that almost seems to *glow* from the contrast with the snowy whiteness of the linen hung across them to dry. Add to these, the wind-mill, the snug public-house, with its old tree and swinging sign; the cottages huddled up in a corner, opposite the pond, or loosely scattered where the first "enclosers" reared their mud huts; a gipsy encampment, if the common be a wide one; and, if it be a summer evening, the cricketers;—and you have pretty much what combine to make up 'a common,' all England over. Yet, although alike, it is with a difference, and a common is always an object of pleasure to a pedestrian, unless there be the name only and not the thing. An enclosed common is an eyesore to every lover of English scenery.

Esher Common is without some of these features, but it has others that perhaps make amends; we must not, however, linger over it: here is Claremont before us, with its associations so blended with the national feelings and its various attrac-

[Claremont.]

tions. From Esher Common we enter the park, rich in

"Old Patrician trees and Plebeian underwood,"

and abounding with game. The original mansion was built by Vanbrugh, the architect of Blenheim, and afterwards enlarged by the Earl of Clare (better known as the Duke of Newcastle), from whom it took its name. Dr. Garth published a poem on the occasion, entitled 'Claremont,' which is not destined, we believe, to be immortal. Claremont afterwards became the property of one or two other parties, and was at length purchased by Lord Clive, "the Conqueror of India," who had Vanbrugh's house pulled down, and the present one erected by Browne, celebrated in his day as a landscape gardener as well as an architect. It is in that style of "classic" of which so many specimens were produced about that time. It is said to have cost above a hundred thousand pounds. Lord Clive was not a favourite with the peasantry of the surrounding neighbourhood. Strange tales were circulated respecting his wealth, and exaggerated rumours of his Indian cruelties, and he was regarded with a feeling almost of horror by them.

After the death of Lord Clive, Claremont passed through several hands, and was finally bought by the government for the Prince Leopold and the Princess Charlotte. Her death occurred here, and produced a general gloom to which English history hardly describes a parallel. In the gardens, a summer-house to which the princess was very partial has been converted by the prince into a mausoleum, and dedicated to her memory. Claremont, as is well known, is a favourite retreat of Her who has so happily succeeded its late possessor in the

affection of the nation. Since the accession of Leopold to the throne of Belgium, the visits of Victoria almost alone give life to the deserted mansion.

From Claremont we pass through Esher, a respectable but dull town, to Esher Place, which Thomson sings of as "Esher's groves

> "in sweetest solitude embrac'd
> By the soft windings of the silent Mole."

The grounds of Esher Place are very beautiful, and vistas are so arranged and garden seats so placed as to call attention to the loveliest prospects. At Esher Place Wolsey had a palace, a seat attached to the Bishopric of Winchester; and here it was that he retired after losing Henry's favour, and when he had been so ruthlessly despoiled of his other possessions by that rapacious monarch. His residence at Esher was marked by deep mortifications, and it is quite painful to read his earnest and importunate supplications for mercy. This is altogether a humiliating period of his life. Just before his fall his style of living was of almost unequalled magnificence; here he was obliged to borrow beds, linen, and even dishes; was straitened almost for the necessaries of life, and was only enabled, by the contributions of his chaplains, and of the followers who remained constant to him in his adversity, to pay the wages due to his inferior servants. "His faults lie gently on him!"

> "This cardinal,
> Though from an humble stock, undoubtedly
> Was fashion'd to much honour."

The only remnant of Wolsey's palace is what is called Wolsey's Tower. It stands by the side of the Mole, and is a red brick building, bearing in its general appearance, and also in its details, a

strong resemblance to the older parts of Hampton Court: both, it will be remembered, were erected by Wolsey at about the same period. The tower is partly overgrown by ivy, but is in good preservation.

[Wolsey's Tower.]

While the visitor is pondering on the character and fortunes of that extraordinary man, and trying, perchance, to recall to his imagination the strange times—big with so many mighty events—in which he lived; a train of carriages will, perhaps, dash along the railway viaduct that is carried just be-

yond the tower, and bring home to his mind with a startling vividness the wondrous changes that have come over our land since the fallen Cardinal here in bitterness of heart gave utterance to those affecting meditations on the mutability of all sublunary things, which our great bard has rendered immortal.

Soon after passing under the railway, the river separates into two branches: the one runs by Ember Court and near Thames Ditton, so favourite a resort of Thames anglers; the other flows towards Moulsey Hurst, notorious in past days as the scene of many prize pugilistic encounters. The banks of the Mole are here low and marshy, and there is little more that is attractive in its course till its union with the Thames nearly opposite Hampton Court. Near its termination, we pass through the pretty rustic village of East Moulsey (or Molesey, as it was formerly spelt), which takes its name from our river. Here it works a large factory-like and most unpicturesque mill. The termination of the Mole is a noble one. From its mouth the Thames, with Hampton Court on the opposite bank, form a picture of surpassing beauty; that magnificent palace is nowhere seen to greater advantage.

Here, then, we part from our silent companion. The railway station stands invitingly near, but the rambler will prefer, if there be time, to cross the old wooden bridge to Hampton Court, and from thence stroll through the stately avenues of Bushy Park to Richmond, from which place he may—after a passing glance at the always new prospect from its hill—embark on board the Richmond steamer, and thus appropriately conclude this river ramble.

THE ADUR, ARUN, AND WEY.

[Cottages at Henfield.]

One of the very pleasantest home rambles that can be pointed out for that

"Soote season that bud and bloom forth brings,"

is along the banks of these rivers. "Somer is come," as the old poet sings; and among the many delightful things that come with it, none

is more delightful than the opportunity it affords to some — alas! that it is to so few — of the care-worn sons of toil, of a brief respite from their daily labour and anxiety. In a large city almost all are overwrought—mind and body are alike overstrained, and become enervated unless they sometimes seek quiet and repose, and, by availing themselves of free Nature's grace, obtain a renewal of health and vigour. All who can should make a summer holiday, however short; for not alone is the health improved thereby, knowledge streams in upon the mind; a season is afforded for thoughtfulness; we can in seclusion look before and after, ponder on our past course and see where we have erred, and form plans of manly purpose for the future; while by communing with those of different pursuits and interests to our own, some of our prejudices are brushed away, and we learn to look with more kindly feelings on all; and the taste is refined and chastened by a return to simple natural enjoyments, and an absence for awhile from the feverish excitement of the city.

Thus, if we mistake not, it will be found that along with the buoyancy of health come an expansion and purification of the mind—nay, may we not say—something of a renovation of the whole man? Nought like a solitary ramble among the mountains for this purpose. But there are many who can make a short holiday, yet to whom a mountain trip is quite impracticable; for such we are about to point out a route that will lead them through a variety of beautiful scenery, and that offers at the same time many attractions to the man of science and the lover of our national antiquities; while it will yield an abundance of

enjoyment to those who are prepared, as every pedestrian ought to be, to draw pleasure from every wholesome source.

The course we intend to take is to follow the Sussex Adur from its source till it falls into the sea; then to keep along the sea-shore till we reach the mouth of the Arun, up which river we shall proceed to its junction, by means of a cutting, with the Wey: and then along the Wey till that river unites with the Thames. We shall thus twice cross the county of Sussex, and once cross Surrey; and in so doing pass through much of the finest scenery in each county.

The scenery of Sussex has been often praised, and sometimes highly, yet many are little aware of its richness and variety. The attractions of more distant counties have caused it to be unfairly neglected. Tourists seldom keep in mind that—

> "To know that which before us lies in daily life
> Is the prime wisdom;"

but value scenery as some folks value old china, for its being unattainable near home. Scenes that they would scarcely look at a second time if within reach by an hour's ride, they fall into raptures over if they need two or three days to arrive at. But our business is to describe, not to rail: and we must call attention to choice spots when we come upon them, without heeding whether others will admire them or not.

The Adur has really three or four sources; one is about two miles from Slinfold, another about as far from Nuthurst in Sussex—and all the Sussex rivers rise in the county—these unite near West Grinstead; they are swelled by a brook that rises near West Chiltington. But the stream

that we take as our guide has its source near Slaugham. This we can easily and pleasantly reach from the Balcombe station of the Brighton Railway. We leave the station on our left, and crossing a field, come at once into the lane that leads to Slaugham—and a most delightful lane it is. If we wanted to give any one a favourable notion of a thoroughly countrified English lane, we could not select a better. The proximity of the railway has done nothing to destroy its rural character. It is as unpolished and unimproved as Sir Uvedale Price or Mr. Gilpin could desire; but then, how it abounds with wild flowers which they would not have stooped to look at! We never saw a lane more full of flowers, or of choicer and lovelier kinds, than this lane in this present spring. From it and the neighbouring wood few young botanists but would be able to find a new specimen or two for their herbarium. Then there are a cottage or two and a farm-house, just enough to break the continuity of hedge-row pleasantly, and not sufficient to destroy the quiet. There are some fine trees in the hedges too, and peeps between them across the Weald, which stretches away on our left, with a huge barrier of lofty downs beyond. On a clear bright day, with just clouds enough in the sky to chequer with their flitting shade the level stretch of scenery, and to relieve the uniformity of the distant downs, the tourist will hardly wish for a more lovely prospect.

The source of our river is in a corner of St. Leonard's Forest; and we may remark in passing, that the sources of the rivers Adur, Arun, and Ouse, which run through Sussex, and a feeder of the Surrey Mole, rise within a circle of three or

four miles' diameter. St. Leonard's Forest was in olden times the scene of the doings of a mighty serpent. An account of him and his proceedings was published at the time, under the following title: 'True and Wonderful. A Discourse relating to a strange monstrous Serpent or Dragon, lately discovered and yet living, to the great annoyance and divers slaughters both of Men and Cattle, by his strong and violent Poison, in Sussex, two miles from Horsham, in a Wood called St. Leonard's Forest, and thirty miles from London, this present month of August, 1614. With the true generation of Serpents.' This "serpent or dragon, as some call it, is reported to be some nine feet, or rather more, in length, and shaped almost in the form of an axletree of a cart, a quantity of thickness in the midst, and somewhat smaller at both ends. The former part, which he shoots forth as a neck, is supposed to be an ell long; with a white ring, as it were, of scales about it. The scales along his back seem to be blackish, and so much as is discovered under his belly appeareth to be red; for I speak of no nearer description than a reasonable ocular distance. For coming too near it, hath already been too dearly paid for, as you shall hear hereafter. It is likewise discovered to have large feet, but the eyes may be there deceived; for some suppose that serpents have no feet, but glide upon certain ribs and scales, which both defend them from the upper part of their throat unto the lower part of their belly, and also cause them to move much the faster. For so this doth, and rids way (as we call it) as fast as a man can run. He is of countenance very proud, and at the sight or hearing of men or cattle

will raise his neck upright, and seem to listen and look about with great arrogancy. There are likewise on either side of him discovered two great bunches so big as a large foot-ball, and (as some think) will in time grow to wings; but God, I hope, will (to defend the poor people in the neighbourhood) that he shall be destroyed before he grow so fledge. He will cast his venom about four rods from him, as by woeful experience it was proved on the bodies of a man and woman coming that way, who afterwards were found dead, being poisoned and much swelled, but not preyed upon." This forbearance of the monster is accounted for by his taste leading him to prefer the flesh of rabbits to that of men and women; and there was in his neighbourhood "a coney-warren, which he much frequents." But if his taste was delicate, as much can scarcely be said of his person, which used to leave "a track or path behind it (as by a small similitude we may see in a snail) which is very corrupt and offensive to the scent." There are plenty of vouchers for the truth of what is told, and the careful writer informs us that the serpent was seen, among others, by "the carrier of Horsham, who lyeth at the White Horse in Southwark, and who can certify to the truth of all that has been here related; by John Steele, Christopher Holder, and a widow woman living at Faygate." Mr. Dallaway, in his 'Rape of Bramber,' suggests that the pamphlet was "probably a satire on some obnoxious proprietor;" but there is nothing in it to countenance such a supposition, and the editor of the 'Harleian Miscellany,' in vol. iii. of which it is reprinted, evidently conceived it to be written in good faith—if he did not believe the story, of

which we are not quite certain. He says, "This relation breathes such a spirit of sincerity, seems so well attested, and tallies so well with what has been advanced on the same head by the best ancient and modern historians, that we cannot well doubt of its truth." We leave our readers to form their own conclusions, only calling attention to the rigid scrupulosity of our chronicler as evinced in what he says about the "reasonable ocular distance," his scepticism about the "large feet," and his judicious reference to "the carrier who lyeth at the White Horse."

Slaugham has few attractions, nor is our river here of any consequence; but the Ouse forms a good-sized pond by Slaugham Mill. From Slaugham we may cross directly to Bolney, and in our way we shall meet with some extensive views over the downs. The neighbourhood about Bolney is very beautiful, and there is something picturesque in the appearance of the old worn-out looking church as it stands on a bit of a hill, with the in-and-out village below it. The Adur is here a pretty rivulet; it is said that salmon are sometimes taken in it, and trout larger than would be expected from its tiny size. Some years back the parish clerk of Bolney caught a trout here that weighed twenty-two pounds; he sent it to Brighton as a present to George IV. Our river now flows by Twineham and Shermanbury, at which last there is (or was, a few years ago, for we did not think to look after it when in the neighbourhood the other day) the gateway of an old mansion called Ewhurst. Shermanbury and its vicinity—which may perhaps remind the visitor of 'Our Village'—abound in pleasant spots, which we might well dwell on for

a while, were there not so much before us. Soon after it leaves Shermanbury the Adur is joined by the streams we spoke of above, which flow past West Grinstead, and is made navigable for barges as far as Mock Bridge. The rambler will do well to proceed by the road, or better by the bye-lanes, from Shermanbury to Henfield, instead of following the river.

Most leisurely walkers will find this enough for their first day's journey, and Henfield is a convenient resting-place. The town, if such it can be called, is old and respectable: the neighbourhood pretty enough to employ a few hours very pleasantly in surveying it; and the White Hart is an excellent house to put up at—good accommodation, good living, and a civil landlord. Henfield church is a plain edifice of the perpendicular style of architecture; it has been somewhat injured by modern churchwardens, yet is by no means uninteresting. It has a fine window of the fifteenth century; the others are more recent, and not handsome. There are a few curious monuments. In the chancel there are the effigies in brass of a woman and a boy, with some verses on the latter, which show that "fine writing" does not belong exclusively to our generation. The boy, Meneleb Raynsford, died in 1627; and the writer tells us—

> "Great Jove hath lost his Ganymede, I know;
> Which made him seek another here below;
> And finding none, not one, like unto his,"

till he saw Master Meneleb, he speedily seized upon him; and he now, instead of

> "A child on earth, is made a saint in heaven."

There have been some queer saints made ere now

by the Roman pontiff, as everybody who has read Middleton knows; but we doubt if he ever made one so odd as Ganymede's successor.

Whoever wanders much among the scenery of Old England should not fail to regard with some attention the domestic architecture of the several counties; we mean, especially, the cottage architecture. Like most other homely relics, our cottages are fast crumbling away. Flimsy, wretched cottages, that seem mainly raised to show with how few bricks a house can be built, are everywhere taking their places—at least in our southern and eastern counties, where bricks are used; and in our northern and western it is little better, so far as character is concerned. We do not mean to say that the cottager is worse housed than he used to be. It is not so, but rather the reverse. And where those more substantial tenements to which we have called attention are found in the occupation of cottagers, it should be borne in mind that, in all probability, they were originally farm-houses, when farms were held in smaller sizes than they now are; or they were the houses of persons of a higher grade than the cottager, but who now occupy more showy dwellings. The cottages formerly were, no doubt, almost universally mud or clay huts, such as are still common in Hampshire, especially about the New Forest, and are not uncommon in some other counties. But the kind of cottage of which we speak is numerous in the middle parts of Sussex, and there are few places better than the neighbourhood of Henfield to seek them in. Backed by high lands, or a clump of fine old trees, in order to shelter them from the northern and easterly winds, their situation is

almost always eminently picturesque, and they are always adapted to their situation; while their bold projecting gables, &c., allow a fine play of light and shade, and thus heighten the general effect. On a humble scale, they exhibit much of that kind of excellence Sir Joshua Reynolds remarked in the edifices erected by Vanbrugh (see his Thirteenth Discourse). They are built of dark-red bricks, with very frequently tiles of various sizes and fancy shapes as a facing to the gables, as well as a covering to the roofs: some of them, but not many, are partly built of wood. The chimneys are a feature eminently characteristic. In nearly all recent domestic buildings of an inexpensive character the chimneys are an absolute and unqualified deformity. Yet the most cursory view of one of these stacks would show how greatly that necessary portion of an English house may be made to conduce to its general appearance. The old houses scattered over these southern counties have a considerable similarity of character, and yet there is a distinct individuality, so to speak, in those of each county. The chimney-shafts of a Sussex cottage are larger and more massive, but not quite so highly ornamented as in the Kent cottages, though more ornamented than those of Surrey and Hampshire; and they are different from each. We had thought of engraving a few to illustrate our remarks; but we shall content ourselves with calling the rambler's attention to them, assured that it is these small matters, these local details, that give much of the proper tone to a pedestrian trip. The rambler will do well to notice these cottages: as they stand out from their background of deep-green trees, with their massive chimneys relieved

perhaps by a bright blue sky, and with their lively groups of pigs, dogs, and children about their doors, they will yield him many a rustic picture such as he will scarcely meet with in an exhibition-room. As we said, they are passing away; and the cottages now erecting, or lately erected, are only four flat brick walls, with strait holes for the windows, and for the chimneys a miserable thing without an atom of ornament except some staring red chimney-pots. True, there is here and there a cottage of a more ambitious character starting up, and there are some smart park lodges; but in these finery usurps the place of ornament, and seldom does there appear to be any attention given to the local character of the old houses in the neighbourhood; but rather a kind of pattern-house is erected, such as can be speedily obtained from some of the pattern-books that are occasionally put forth for the guidance of those who find it easier and more profitable to adopt the fashion of the day, than by thought and observation to produce such an adaptation of the old forms about them as may be suitable for present wants, and yet seem as if inspired by the genius of the place.

From Henfield we may stroll down to the meadows, and along by the river, past the little unassuming church of Beeding, and so round to Bramber; but it will be better to cross the bridge at once on reaching the river, and, leaving Ashurst on our right, proceed directly to Steyning. We need not hurry, though; the river is indeed not so beautiful as it might be, and would be, were not its banks kept trim for the convenience of navigation; but to make amends, there are wide and fertile meadows, well dotted with trees, and with

abundance of cattle grazing about them; and bounded by a lofty range of downs, here rising bold and abrupt, and there more softly undulating,—scenery, in a word, just such as the rambler likes to linger along. Steyning is an ancient town, and a very interesting one. There are too some old houses about it, and the church is old and of much beauty. Britton, in his 'Architectural Antiquities' (v. 210), refers to Steyning church as containing some genuine Norman architectural features; and Rickman speaks of it as possessing "some of the finest Norman enriched mouldings, with a variety of excellent and elaborate detail which deserves attentive study." Steyning is a good example of a sequestered country-town, and perhaps will make a more convenient resting-place than Henfield.

In rambling over this Weald, as the low ground we have just come along is called, it should not be forgotten that, though not exactly in this locality, it was in this Weald that Mantell's geological marvels—the enormous Iguanodon, the strange Hylosaurus, and stranger Pterodactylus—were discovered. The wealden formation may be well observed in various parts of the valley of the Adur, whose bed, indeed, is formed by a fissure in that formation. This is not the place to go into details on that subject; the reader who wishes for local information respecting the wealden formation will find it in abundance in Dr. Mantell's 'Geology of the South-east of England,' and a sufficiently full account of the remains above referred to, in his 'Wonders of Geology.' The remains themselves are a striking feature in the collection at the British Museum.

As we follow our river, we shall soon see before

[Bramber Castle.]

us, on an elevation on our right, a fragment of the grey old keep of Bramber Castle. It has a picturesque appearance as we view it from the river. The mound on which it stands is hidden by trees that are carried nearly to the summit, and over their tops the rude remain frowns grimly. Seen from a distance, it is not so striking, though hardly less singular. Then the high ridge of downs behind it comes into view, and lessens its importance; the magnitude of the hills causing the sturdy dark mass to dwindle almost into insignificance. But we will ascend the mound, and see what we can discover of the old castle. Little, indeed, is left to reward us, yet enough to trace out something of its extent and general plan. Its area within the walls is 560 feet from south to north, and 280 from east to west. On the east side it was defended by a deep morass, and on the south-west and north by a vallum and deep ditch. Of the building, the keep alone retains anything like a relic of its ancient form, and it is grand in its ruin—the grandeur of rude magnitude. The keep was square; only one of its walls remains, and that is tolerably perfect, and of great thickness. Several fragments of the outer walls are scattered about, and they are also very thick. All are composed of flints and rubble. This keep is supposed to be Norman; but as a Bramber Castle is mentioned in 'Domesday,' there must unquestionably have been a castle here in Saxon times. The Saxon castle might have been strengthened by De Braose, a Norman follower of William, to whom it was given after the Conquest; and the keep was probably erected then—if indeed it be Norman. De Braose had above forty other manors in Sussex given to him at the same time. William de Braose, one of his descendants, was

among the foremost and most powerful of the barons who opposed the tyrannical measures of John. That pusillanimous monarch, in consequence, endeavoured to seize him privately, but, being warned in time, he escaped with his family into Ireland. Here he carried on some negotiations with John, who, however, as soon as he saw them in his power, seized his wife and eldest son, and committed them close prisoners to Windsor Castle, where they both died—it is said of starvation. De Braose escaped to Paris, but did not long survive the murder of his wife and child. John gave his estates to the Duke of Cornwall, but after his death they were restored to a son of De Braose. Bramber Castle afterwards passed by marriage into the hands of the Howards. If we had space, it would not be uninteresting to trace the history of Bramber Castle, though there is no very important event connected with it. Like most other castles, it was seized and held by the parliamentary troops; and while it was in their possession Charles II. passed through the town in disguise, the streets at the time being full of soldiers. After it came into the possession of the Howard family it was suffered to go to decay; and it has been said that its destruction was caused more by gunpowder, not employed in war, but to obtain the materials, than by time.

Before quitting the mound, there is a point a little higher than that on which the castle stands, that should be ascended. The view from it is a singularly fine one, reaching, in one direction, over the flat Weald to an immense distance, and along the downs as far as the Devil's Dyke; and, in the other, away over the sea to the trembling

verge of the horizon. In this direction we have a goodly stretch of land between us and the sea, the coast-line being broken by Old Shoreham and its newer namesake, and the mid-distance dotted with two or three tiny villages; while the little borough of Bramber lies snugly below us, and the bare grey ruin is at our feet, with the ivy-covered tower of the church serving to unite the old keep with the town it overlooks. On the slope of the mound on which are the ruins of the castle, is Bramber Church, an old building, partly Norman; but it has been repaired and smartened of late, so as to look very different to what it did when we knew it ten or a dozen years ago. The renovations are not in keeping with the original: windows of quite a different kind have been inserted.

Bramber itself is a desolate-looking place—the very picture of a *rotten* borough. There is no trade and the houses are in a tumbling-down condition. The old ones—and there were some good-looking ones some twenty years back—are all gone, or going; and in their stead miserable hovels are being erected. The whole place has a poverty-stricken air, which is not at all lessened by its displaying some faint traces of former superiority. Before the passing of the Reform Bill it returned two members to parliament, the number of voters being, we believe, somewhere about thirty. It was placed in Schedule A, and all its little importance thereby destroyed. The property in the votes was pretty equally divided between the families of Lord Calthorpe and the Duke of Rutland, and consequently there were sometimes some rather severe election contests, and not a few election petitions. At an election, in 1768, it is said that

1000*l.* were offered to a poor man for his vote, and refused. After this election, which was followed by a petition, a compromise was effected between the families, and, until the disfranchisement of the borough by the Reform Bill, each named a member. Wilberforce sat as member for Bramber during several parliaments; and there is an anecdote told of him in his Life, that travelling along here once, he called to the post-boy to inquire the name of the village they were passing through. "Bramber!" said Wilberforce; "why, that's the place I am member for!" The Adur was once a much larger river than it now is; Camden says, "in foregoing times it was wont to carry ships with full sail as far as Brember."

A great charm in pedestrianism, as compared with any other mode of travelling, is the perfect independence of feeling it imparts. You may go where you please, or stay where you please. When the roads are dusty, you may turn to the lanes; when the fields and meadows become wearisome, you may betake yourself to the hills; you need never stay to inquire whether there is a carriage-way, and you can always make sure of a village inn at night. It is no doubt well in travelling to follow the route previously marked out, but not too servilely; many an unexpected tract of beauty or interest may open, and he is a dullard who will then hesitate to follow it, though at the expense of deranging a neatly contrived plan. We told our readers we should take them along the Adur and Arun, but we did not mean to go so far from home without a digression. And now we intend to lead them a right pleasant ramble over the hills for a dozen miles or so. They who prefer it, however

may follow the river; from Bramber it runs nearly due south, widening as it goes, till, as it approaches Shoreham, it spreads, at every tide, over a large space; and the boggy soil on either side shows that it must once have been much wider. There is nothing calling for notice till it reaches Shoreham; it passes by St. Botolph's and Combe's, but there is nothing of consequence in them, and nothing note-worthy about their little barn-like churches. Of Shoreham we shall have somewhat to say when we arrive there.

But turn your back to Bramber-street, and with us mount the hill that rises directly before you; there is an old road up one side of it, but we aim at the summit; it is a stiffish climb on a hot day—but onwards, another pull and we are at the top. There is something strangely refreshing in the breeze that comes over these South Downs from the sea. The whole man seems strengthened and exhilarated by it. The silence and the solitude too produce a feeling of elevation, almost of awe, in the mind—

"You feel for a time lifted above earth."

Then, what a noble sight is a fine range of downs stretching their long varying line far as the eye can reach! The downs are always beautiful;—whether thrown by the morning sun into bold and strikingly contrasted light and shadow; brightening in its mid-day blaze; melting under its softening influence as it sinks into the west; or when that mellow light is shed over them all, that is seen just *after* the sun has sunk below the horizon; or again, when, on a clear summer's night, they are subjected to the magical power of a bright full moon: they are always beautiful. Ask Copley

Fielding, who, with the eye and hand of genius, has seen and depicted them under such various aspects; and he, while confessing their beauty, will tell you that there are many phases of it that he could not hope to portray. We are not desiring to compare our South Downs with the northern mountains, but we may admire Spenser without disparagement to Shakspere. Well, we are on the hills; and now whither are we going? Onwards. That is Edburton church below us on the north; a pretty little structure in its way, with some carving about it we might examine if we were by it; you may see its curious leaden font figured in Dallaway's 'Rape of Bramber,' and the place described. But we are bound to the "Devil's Dyke;" a favourite place of ours when we were young, and we must even have a look at it once again. See, in yonder 'coomb' beneath you is a little camp of gipsies, and a snug warm berth they have found for themselves. If we were Borrow, we might patter the crabbed *gitano* to them; but as we are not, we need not stay longer than to take a peep at their picturesque appearance as they are huddled there with their frail houses in that sheltered nook.

Well, here is the Dyke! Is it not a strange place? A long, narrow, and enormously deep cleft between two almost perpendicular hills; you hardly know what to liken it to, unless it be a Cyclopean railway-cutting. Antiquarians describe it, or rather the hill above it, for the dyke is the trough below, as a very large oval encampment, at least a mile in circumference, and only accessible by one narrow point of land, which is defended by a very high bank and a broad ditch. They add, that it was probably formed by the Romans, who

took advantage of the natural shape of the hills, and then by their military skill brought it to its present state; and that it was no doubt one of the chain of forts that was carried along the summits of these downs. The fact of Roman coins having been found here leaves, they say, no doubt of its occupation by that people. This may be; but there is another story about its original formation. The people in the Weald below, it is said, were uncommonly pious, and had built so many churches and religious houses, that the Evil One looked on them with no good will. Finding that they continued to grow more devout, and turned a deaf ear to all his emissaries, he one night set boldly to work to scoop out a channel, so as to let in the sea and swamp them at once. But as it happened, an old woman in a cottage hard by, hearing an extraordinary scratching noise outside, seized her rushlight (for cotton-wicks were not in use then) and hobbled out to see what was the matter. The wicked one, mistaking her rushlight for the rising sun, and startled at its untimely appearance, took to his heels, and never came back to finish his malicious purpose. So runs one version, and something like it has appeared in print; but we must confess we do not entirely credit it. It does not appear quite feasible. The arch-fiend was, we all know, if saintly legends are to be believed, very often outwitted in olden times—and sometimes by tricks too shallow for the shallowest cockney of our day; still that he should have mistaken a rushlight for the rising sun is a little too much for our faith—and we are more inclined to adopt the story as we heard it when we were young, and used to wander at times hereabout. When it happened

was longer ago than I can tell, said our informant, but as I heard it, I will tell it to you. There dwelt in the valley below a holy man, who had retired there from the wicked world, that in solitude, and away from the vanities and cares of life, he might pursue a course of austere self-denial, and practise without ostentation deeds of benevolence and mercy. His food was of the simplest herbs, his drink water from the little brook that ripples along the vale. But only on himself was his austerity expended, to every one else who sought him in their distress he was gentle, kind, and generous. The poor he relieved, the sick he healed, the miserable and the unfortunate he comforted. Long he lived there, and ever was the odour of his sanctity increasing: till at length the arch-enemy, who had tried as many means to pervert him as ever he expended on St. Anthony, or St. Dunstan, or any other famous saint of those saintly times, determined to sweep him away by one grand manœuvre. For this purpose he resolved to cut a trough to the sea, and thus try on a large scale the saint's powers of floating. Having selected a dark night, he began his work in such earnest, that in a few minutes he had hollowed out as much as you see. But he was to meet with his match. At the moment he began to work, our holy personage had intimation of what was going on, and taking his lamp and his crucifix, he boldly sallied forth against the mighty one; and he prevailed. For no sooner did the wicked spirit see the holy man approach so armed, than he shouldered his spade and set off as fast as he could scamper; nor did he ever after venture near the valley, which in consequence flourished marvellously while the good saint lived.

And ever since has this place been called the *Devil's Dyke*.

We do not vouch for the truth of this story, but there is the Dyke as a standing proof of its verity; and if that be not sufficient, there yet remains what ought to convince the most sceptical. For the Dyke is not the only scar left behind from that night's business. Some five or six hundred yards off are the prints of the fiend's feet, where in his hurry he trod on some boggy turf. There they are to this day, five or six steps, each a little bigger than those of an ordinary man (and, strange to say, they are not cloven, so that he must have worked in shoes), and there they are likely to remain until some scientific agriculturist is able to turn the ground to profit. The name of the holy man is irrecoverably lost, and—alas! for all sublunary fame—his most famous deed is being transferred to an old woman and her rushlight.

However the Dyke may have been formed, it is a wild-looking place, and a wild place it is too for a night-ramble. Strange sights, we have been told, are seen here then, and we partly believe it: we have seen some ourselves. But we must away; not, however, without directing attention to the magnificent prospect from the summit of the Dyke—unequalled in its way in Sussex, perhaps in any of the surrounding counties. We shall not attempt to describe it; suffice it that we have directed our readers' attention to it. It is worth while to be here on a fine autumnal morning before sunrise, to see the mists pass away from over the Weald. Large woody tracts retain the moisture long after it has exhaled from the adjoining parts, and appear like wide and long lakes, giving a peculiar charac-

ter to the scene. The sun rises over the hills, and often has a grand appearance:

> "Full many a glorious morning have we seen
> Flatter these mountain tops with sovereign eye,
> Kissing with golden face the meadows green,
> Gilding pale streams with heavenly alchemy."

There is a little inn at the top of the Dyke Hill —(a windy situation: when there is no wind elsewhere in the county, they say you may find plenty there; and we have heard it whistle down those chimneys o'nights famously)—where the stranger may be accommodated with a bed on the sofa in the little parlour; and there is some convenience in that, for if he is bent on "preventing the sun rising," he may find it necessary—at least we have —to make his escape out of the window. The Dyke is much frequented by "gipsy parties," of which Sussex folk are very fond. In our younger days we have been with more than one here, and it was a pleasant excuse to stay rather late, that we might in our way home hear the nightingales sing in a wood not many miles off; and where else do nightingales sing as they do in Sussex?——But we must leave this place; and we shall have a delightful walk over the downs to Shoreham.

Old Shoreham is a poor place. Its inhabitants are nearly all fishermen, and they only possess a few cabins. It was once of some consequence, but the rise of New Shoreham, and the diversion of the mouth of the river by the accumulation of a sand-bank, have caused its utter decay. The church, which is the mother church of the county, is an interesting structure. It is often called Saxon, but is no doubt Anglo-Norman. It was conferred by the De Braose mentioned above as the owner of

Bramber castle, on the Abbey of Florance at Salmur, soon after the Conquest; but there is no evidence that it was erected by him; nor, we believe, is the date of its erection known. It consists of a nave, chancel, transept, and tower. The tower is in the centre of the church rising from the intersection of the cross. It is supported on four large arches in the inside of the church; they are of great beauty—circular, and richly carved with the various Norman ornaments. There is a fine circular doorway in the south transept. The building has been suffered to go to decay, but is now being thoroughly repaired. As far as the repairs have proceeded, they appear to be judiciously performed; the restored portions seeming to be taken from neighbouring churches of a nearly contemporary period. The restoration of the edifice is being accomplished by subscriptions, the inhabitants being too poor to accomplish it unaided: a box is placed inside the church, into which the visitor may drop his contribution. An engraving of Old Shoreham church is given in Horsfield's 'History of Sussex,' but it is very inaccurate: there are only two windows on the south side, instead of three, and they are represented as pointed, instead of round; the doorway is also much too large, and altogether the character of the edifice is missed. The river is here, as we said above, of considerable width, especially at high tides; it is crossed by a wooden bridge five hundred feet long, and containing twenty-three arches. It is, however, rather awkwardly narrow, being only twelve feet wide; it is of no beauty. Since the erection of the bridge at New Shoreham the traffic over it is very much lessened.

[Old Shoreham Church.]

The Adur probably emptied itself into the sea between Old and New Shoreham, but a sand-bank has been formed and gradually extended for some three or four miles along the shore, so that the river now runs parallel to the sea for that distance, and is only separated from it by a narrow strip of sand. As the encroachments of the sand lessened the depth of the river and caused the coast-line to recede from the old town, the houses would of necessity be built where more adapted to the convenience of traffic, and thus New Shoreham rose into being and consequence as the other decayed. But New Shoreham must have been a place of importance at a very early date. The church, which was collegiate, was of large size; and though not so large as in its original state—the greater part of the nave having been destroyed—it is even now one of the finest churches in Sussex. It is of the later Norman period: Dallaway says, there is every reason to suppose that it was erected in the reign of John, by the William de Braose mentioned in our account of Bramber Castle: it is remarkable as exhibiting a union of Norman with early pointed arches. Rickman, in his 'Attempt to discriminate the Styles of English Architecture,' says, that "New Shoreham church is an excellent one for practical study, particularly when considered in conjunction and contrast with its neighbours Steyning and Old Shoreham." Of the importance of New Shoreham harbour at an early period it may be considered a sufficient proof, that when in the reign of Edward III. the various ports were required to contribute ships of war properly armed, fitted, and manned, Shoreham was called upon to send twenty-six ships, while London only

sent twenty-five. It is not a place of much consequence now: the accumulation of sand has carried the Adur some miles beyond New Shoreham, whose trade would have been quite destroyed thereby, if the evil had not been partly remedied by the formation of the present harbour. A branch from the Brighton Railway has been carried to Shoreham, and promises to be of much service to the town. An elegant suspension-bridge has been thrown across the Adur here; it is from the designs of Mr. Clark, the engineer of that at Hammersmith, which it much resembles, but is ornamented with some large lions, the crest of the Duke of Norfolk, at whose expense the bridge was constructed. There are a few old houses in the town, but none to call for notice either as regards appearance or historic interest. It was at Shoreham that Charles II. embarked when he escaped from England after the battle of Worcester.

Thus, then, we have seen pretty nearly all the Adur has to show us; and now we will bid it good speed, and turn, as we arranged, towards the Arun. There are two ways of reaching that river—along the sea-side, or across by the villages a little inland; we shall follow either as inclination may lead us, or there may be anything worth looking at to call us aside. The sea along this part of the coast does not put on its most attractive phase. There are no cliffs, and the shore is flat; so that at low-tide there is a long, dull, unbroken stretch of sand between you and the sea, extending in some places for a quarter of a mile; and instead of the broad majestic sweep of mighty waves, lines of feeble ripples break at your feet. Still the sea is the sea, and it is worth a twenty miles' journey

any morning only to inhale its refreshing odour, as every one feels who has been long absent from it. But we must hasten on, the limits of this paper and the ground we have to travel over telling us that all we can attempt is to act as an indicator—we can only venture to call attention to what is deserving notice, and perhaps now and then throw out a suggestion for the rambler to consider. Our way, if we keep by the sea, lies through Worthing; a place we will leave the local guide-books to describe. Everybody knows the appearance of a fashionable watering-place, with its long rows of tall, smart, white, naked, new houses, looking so fine in the sun with their fresh paint, spruce verandas, and bright green Venetian blinds; white-saddled donkeys and Bath chairs at the corners of the streets; and those queer things called bathing-machines on the sands. And everybody knows, too, how it looks with its human appurtenances—we confess we like to observe *them*, and indeed it is almost a matter of necessity to do so: of all dull places a watering-place is the dullest; and if it were not for the little relief that is obtained by observing the visitors, its dulness would be unbearable. Leaving, then, those who may visit Worthing to make their own observations upon it, we proceed to notice some of those villages we mentioned above.

At Broadwater, of which parish Worthing forms a part, there is a fine Norman church. The exterior is not remarkable, but the interior is very beautiful: it contains some arches richly carved; and in it are some rather splendid monuments to the De la Warr family. It will repay examination, and the key may be obtained close by. The

walk from Old Shoreham to Broadwater, partly across the fields and partly by a country road, is a very pleasant one, and may be taken by those who do not wish to visit Worthing. It leads past Sompting, a thoroughly rural little village, with two or three old houses, and a church that should not be passed by without regard; its tower is one of the oldest in the country. Five or six years ago Mr. Rickman contributed a paper to the Society of Antiquaries, on the churches, &c. now existing that are known to belong to a period prior to the year 1000, which is published in their 'Archæologia,' vol. xxiv. He has only been able, after prolonged and careful inquiry, to name twenty of which any portion can be fixed on as certainly before that date, and these are scattered over thirteen counties. Sompting church is one of them, and it may be worth while to quote his account of it, as it is brief, though somewhat dry, as, addressed to professed antiquaries, we might expect. After stating that the tower is the only part that was erected before 1000, and detailing at some length its construction, he goes on—"The tower is lofty, full one hundred feet to the point of the slated spire; it has four gables, very pointed, and thence arises the spire. The church is a cross church with no aisles, except an east aisle to the transepts; the north has three round piers and two arches, and the south one arch only; the whole of this is mixed with very late Norman and very early English, and appears all before 1200, except the wood-work of the porch, and perhaps its stone-work and some perpendicular inserted windows. On the whole this is a very curious church, and deserves to be studied with great attention."

('Archæologia,' xxiv. p. 45.) The rambler may see proof that the schoolmaster is not "at home" at Sompting; on a beer-shop there is painted in large letters, "deler in Meren Stors." To those who know that part of the country, such an inscription on such a house is suggestive of more than meets the eye. It is our strong conviction, from personal observation and knowledge in many parts of the country, and from some inquiry, that in secluded districts these beer-shops are most commonly serious evils; kept by any one who can raise two or three pounds, and who occupies a house of a certain yearly value, and subject to little inspection, they are the resort and the meeting-house of the poacher, when situated inland, and of the smuggler, when near the sea; and in both cases they are a common medium for the disposal of their illicit gains.

A short distance on the north of Sompting is one of those earthworks of which there formerly existed a chain extending along the ridges of the South Downs; commencing at Bignor, midway between Petworth and Arundel, and ending at Mount Caburn, a mile or two beyond Lewes. This, of which we are now speaking, is called Cissburg, supposed to be a corruption of Cissa's-burg. It is an ancient encampment, of an oval form, of an area of about sixty acres, and is surrounded by a single vallum. It is a Roman work, but might, it has been thought, have been previously occupied by British troops. The view from the summit is very extensive, reaching from Beachy Head to the Isle of Wight. The eight or ten miles from Broadwater to Little Hampton is thickly strewn with small villages, each with its

church; but there is little remarkable in them. Salvington, a hamlet forming part of West Tarring, was the birth-place of the learned and noble-minded John Selden. Fuller's notice of him, in his 'Worthies,' is in his quaintest style:—"His learning did not live in a lane, but traced all the latitude of arts and languages, as appears by the many and various works he hath written, which people affect as they stand affected either by their fancy or function. Lay gentlemen prefer his 'Titles of Honour,' lawyers his 'Mare Clausum,' antiquaries his 'Spicilegium ad Edmearum,' Clergymen like best his book 'De Diis Syriis,' and worst his 'Hystory of Tythes.'" On the west side of the neighbouring parish of West Ferring is another of the earthworks mentioned above. It is of an irregular form, and defended on three sides by a vallation: from this also there is an extensive view, though not so extensive as that from Cissburg. But we mention it on account of its being the site of a whimsical folly. A miller, whose mill stood on the summit of a hill, contracted so strong an affection for the spot, that he resolved not to be separated from it even by death; and accordingly erected at its south-west angle a handsome altar-tomb, and surrounded it by a railing; and under it, as he directed at his death (1798), he was laid. It is one of the lesser "lions" of the neighbourhood of Worthing, from which place parties are, in the season, constantly formed to visit it: most of the hand-posts near the hill direct "To the Miller's Tomb."

We have now reached the Arun, a beautiful river, though its appearance at its mouth is not very prepossessing. Here, as all along this part

[The Arun at Little Hampton.]

of the coast, the shore is flat and shelving. At certain states of the tide ships of considerable tonnage can sail up the Arun as far as Little Hampton, which is nearly a mile from the sea. There is nought very interesting in Little Hampton. It is a compound of a trading town and a watering-place; and each on a small scale. For its size, Little Hampton has a good deal of trade. The church, which is a neat building, is recent, but contains some portions of an older edifice. The Arun is here crossed by a floating bridge, much on the same plan as those at Portsmouth harbour and Southampton Water; this, however, is of a somewhat smaller size, and is worked by two men. If the tourist wishes to walk beside the river, he must cross by the ferry, and proceed along the

left bank. The way is a pleasant one, and he may turn aside occasionally to look at some tiny villages and their churches (of which two or three are Norman) that lie very little out of his way. Or, if he prefer it, he may leave the river awhile and take some bye-roads a little on the left of the main road, and he will thus find a delightful ramble to Arundel. We will follow the river. We must not linger here, or we might point out many a pleasant bit of landscape and many of those little things that somewhat make amends for the lack of grandeur in ordinary scenery. It must be confessed that for a mile or more after leaving Little Hampton—say till we come in sight of Arundel—there is not much that is striking in our way. Yonder is Climping church, and it would be worth stepping aside to see, had we not stayed too long already. The little one before us is Ford. It is of the early English period, and looks older than it is, though some parts of it are anything but recent. This pleasing example of a rustic church stands close by the Arundel and Portsmouth Canal, which here joins the Arun. A little farther up the canal is Yapton church, which, to those who have any interest in ecclesiastical architecture, is perhaps worth a visit. It is an unpretending plain structure, with a Norman doorway.

Following the Arun for about three-quarters of a mile beyond Ford, we arrive at Tortington, whose church, though very small, is very interesting. It has several Norman arches, and one, that over the entrance door, is a rather rich one. We cannot say of Tortington church as we did of Ford, that it looks older than it is; for it has

lately had a new coat of whitewash. Cleanliness is a decent virtue, but it is a pity she flaunts her goodness on the walls of old churches. Somewhat farther up the river are the remains of the refectory of Tortington Priory. Tanner, in his 'Notitia Monastica' (Sussex), says that there was "at Tortington a priory of five or six regular canons of the order of St. Austin, dedicated to St. Mary Magdalene, and founded by the Lady Hadwisa Corbet, before King John's time." The only portion of the priory remaining is that mentioned above, a small part of the refectory, which is now used as a barn. Almost every trace of its original purpose is gone, and no doubt it will be very soon gone altogether. It is built of rubble and flints, and has a singularly old appearance. We give an

[Tortington Priory.]

engraving of it, as we are not aware that it has been engraved before, and it is hardly likely to be again. A few fragments of the walls of the old edifice remain; but the greater part of the materials

were used for neighbouring buildings. The proprietor of the next farm told us that in making alterations recently in his house and premises, which adjoin the church, he found a great many carved stones, grotesque heads, &c. built up in the walls and other parts of his buildings. There are some noble elms hereabouts, which appear to have originally surrounded the priory grounds: the neighbourhood is delightful; and altogether we may judge that the old monks were well housed and agreeably situated.

Arundel, as you look up to it from the river, is one of the most beautiful towns we know. It is situated on the irregular slope of a high hill, on whose summit stands the noble castle, half hidden among lofty trees; the river meanders along its base, reflecting in its translucent waters an inverted image of the town and castle; while on either hand stretch "bosky acres and unshrubbed downs." As you follow the windings of the river from Tortington, it is seen to great advantage; every fresh curve gives you a new and always picturesque view of it. There is a lane, too, leading from Tortington to Arundel, between whose hedge-row elms you obtain some pleasant glimpses of the old town. The rambler will do well to make Arundel his head-quarters in a Sussex trip. The neighbourhood all around is beautiful, and he will find no lack of pleasant walks, either in the immediate vicinity of the town or at a short distance from it. Arundel is an ancient town, and there are some old houses about it, but not many, and they are not very carefully preserved. The church has some details worth inspection, but it has been renovated and somewhat modernized. It contains some rather

LIBRARIES.
WHITEFORD

remarkable monuments to the Earls of Arundel, which will interest the student of our ancient costume. One in particular, to a Countess of Arundel, has attracted much attention on account of its curious head-dress. Charles Stothard, in his beautiful work on 'Monumental Effigies,' has given etchings of some of these monuments. The castle is admirably situated on an eminence overlooking the town, and commanding wide and beautiful prospects. The park, too, is large, abounding in trees, and well stocked with deer and game. It is greatly varied in surface, full of pleasant dells and glades, and altogether its scenery is of a somewhat unusually romantic character. The history of the castle is too long for us to relate here: we can only mention two or three of the more prominent circumstances. Alfred the Great bequeathed the town of Arundel, together with the castle, to his nephew Adhelm. In the reign of Stephen, the castle was held by Queen Adeliza, relict of Henry I. When Queen Maud contested with Stephen for the crown of England, she landed at Little Hampton, and was received into Arundel Castle and hospitably entertained by Adeliza, who does not, however, appear to have taken part with her. She had been but a short time in the castle, when Stephen suddenly appeared with a strong force before it, and demanded that she should be given up to him. This Adeliza resolutely refused, pleading the rites of hospitality and kindred, and Stephen generously permitted Maud to depart unmolested. At the commencement of the war between Charles I. and the parliament, Arundel Castle was held by the parliamentary forces, but gained by an unexpected assault by Lord Hopton for the king. He did not,

however, retain it long: in less than two months it was retaken by Sir William Waller. The famous Chillingworth was in the castle when it was attacked by Waller, and his death is said to have been caused by the excitement and fatigue of the siege, and the ill-treatment he received when he fell into the hands of the parliament soldiers. Some say that he was actively engaged during the siege in constructing machines, for the defence of the castle, after the Roman method, and the vexation arising from their failure greatly hastened his death. He was a good logician, and used his logic to some purpose in theology; but he left out an important consideration in his military elenchus, when he forgot that the Romans did not employ "villainous saltpetre" in their sieges. Colonel Gunter, in his 'Narrative of the Escape of Charles II.,' relates that Charles passed through Arundel while it was held by the parliamentary troops. Charles had slept at the house of the Colonel's sister at Hambledon, "and by breake of day," says the Colonel, "putting up two neats' tongues in my pocketts, which I thought we might need by the way, we sett out and began our journey. We were no sooner come down to Arundell Hill, as we rode close by the castle, but the governor, Captaine Morley, mett us full butt, hunting. The Coll., the better to avoid them, presently alighted—it being a steep hill we were to go downe—and his company (as was agreed before) did as he did. And so happily we escaped them. The king being told who it was, replyed merrily, 'I did not like his starched mouchates.' So we came to Howton, where, on horseback, we made a stopp at an alehouse for some bread and drinke; and there our neats'

tongues stood in very good stead, and were heartily eaten."

Arundel Castle was afterwards reduced to ruins; almost the only portion of the old castle that remains is the large round keep that forms so striking a feature from the neighbouring country. Dallaway, in his 'Rape of Arundel,' says it is Saxon, all Norman keeps being square. It is, or was not long since, used as a preserve for some remarkably large and fine owls, of some foreign kind, but we forget what. The present castle, which is a grand building, though not such as it ought to be, was erected by the late Duke of Norfolk. It is large, and contains some handsome rooms. One is especially pointed out to notice; it is called the Baron's Hall, and is seventy feet long by thirty-four feet wide, with an open roof carefully constructed from those of Westminster, Eltham, and Crosby halls; the windows are of stained glass, and altogether the room is a very handsome one. There are a good many antiquarian nicknackeries about the castle, for the late duke was a collector of such things—it is said he offered a hundred guineas for the "great bed at Ware," but we know not whether it be true; there are also some good pictures, and altogether it may be profitably examined. Dallaway, in the work before referred to, gives the history of the Howard family in connection with the castle at fearful length; and Tierney, in his 'History of Arundel,' repeats it with little more brevity. There is a good deal of interest in it, no doubt, but he must have more patience than we possess who can wade through it—when not, like us, unfortunately obliged to do so.

Just under the castle, on an arm of the Arun, is a picturesque water-mill called Swanbourne Mill.

[Mill at Arundel.]

It stands on the site of an ancient feudal mill; and it appears so old that it is not impossible but some part of it may be a relic of feudal times. At any rate, a mill here is particularly described in Domesday, and in almost every subsequent record of the baronial appendages. All the tenants in the barony were compelled to grind their corn here. In 1279, when one John de Polingfold erected a windmill at Lyminster, nearly two miles distant, the Earl of Arundel directed him to remove it; but he refused, and a jury was in consequence assembled, who ordered it to be demolished, and amerced De Poling-

fold in a considerable fine for having thus trenched on the rights of his lord. In 1380 the yearly rent of Swanbourne Mill was 25*l.*, which is a sufficient evidence of its importance. Richard, Earl of Arundel, gave the tithes of it to his newly founded college, and these, at the dissolution, were valued at 5*l.* per annum. It should by all means be visited: a mill more picturesque in itself or in its situation is not likely to be soon met with. Close under a high chalk scarp, that is almost concealed by luxuriant trees, and crowned by the ivy-coloured keep, the old mill snugly nestles. As you gaze on its tall roofs and projecting gables—its strongly contrasted lights and shadows, and rich warm colouring, and watch the frothy sparkling water starting in light crisp foam from the huge wheel, and, after whirling awhile in widening eddies, settling into the intensely brown shadow, and that again melting imperceptibly into transparency ere it reaches your feet—you long for the cunning hand of old Hobbima, or that Hobbima had had such a mill to paint. From this spot you can only see a portion of the castle; a little farther up the river the whole may be seen, at least of the turrets, and it has a noble appearance stretching for so great a space along the ridge of the hill. The view you there obtain of the castle and a corner of the town is quite a contrast, and a lovely one, to that view of Arundel to which we called attention as we approached the town from Tortington. From this place Arundel is scarcely seen, and the keep is the most prominent feature of the castle all about is still, gentle, undisturbed; at the close of the evening the visitor will feel its quiet, sombre character, and as the landscape becomes lost in the

gloom, and lights begin to appear at one and another of the castle windows, and perhaps are seen hurrying from one part of the dark building to another, his thoughts will revert to feudal times, and his fancy yield a momentary belief that some rude but gaudy pageant is even now in preparation.

The river here abounds with fish; it has long been famous for its eels and its mullets, the latter of which are very delicious and much prized. Fuller mentions them in his 'Sussex Worthies;' he says, "this county is eminent both for sea and river fish, namely, an Arundel mullet, a Chichester lobster, a Selsey cockle, and an Amerley trout." The scenery along the course of the river for the next few miles is almost all that the pedestrian can desire,—calm, gently varying, nowhere grand, but uncommonly beautiful. This part of the Arun has ever been a favourite resort of the painters: and no wonder. The way under Arundel hill is of course less tortuous than beside the river, and hardly less beautiful—indeed we are not sure that it does not afford more striking views. It is not our purpose, as we said, to describe the scenery, except by a few general touches; and there is no place we need stop at hereabout. Barpham, which stands on the right of the Arun, not far from Arundel, will attract attention; its church, which is on an elevation, being a prominent object from the river, and, with the little village, rather picturesque. Here, and in the neighbouring parish of North Stoke, are traces of a large military camp. Passing by North and South Stokes, we reach Houghton, where the Arun is crossed by a substantial bridge; Houghton itself is a pretty village. About half a mile farther is Amberly, a

thoroughly secluded village, but one that should be visited by all who are in its neighbourhood. It contains some considerable portions of an old episcopal castle, which stands close by the church. It is built on a sandstone rock, and forms a parallelogram; the exterior wall on the north side is entire, as are also the east and west ends. Our view is of the south side, which is not so perfect, but more noticeable as containing the principal entrance, which is between two small round towers, with grooves for a portcullis. This side is defended by a fosse, which is crossed by a bridge to the main entrance. The castle does not appear to have been of much strength; but there are some arches and cloisters in the interior, which show that the architecture was in an elegant style. In one of the apartments, called the Queen's room, it is said, "are the remains of the portraits of ten ancient monarchs and their queens, with their coats properly blazoned; and on the ceilings are the portraits of six warriors carved in wood." We regret that we did not visit this room when at Amberly a few weeks since, so that we cannot say whether these portraits exist now. This castle was erected in 1368, by William Rede, bishop of Chichester, as a residence for himself and his successors; but it was afterwards leased to various parties, till it finally passed into the possession of Lord Selsea. When the parliamentary soldiers held possession of Arundel Castle, a party of them, under Waller, plundered and dismantled Amberly Castle. A small portion of the old edifice is converted into the residence of a farmer.

Wherever there is the ruin of an ecclesiastical edifice the neighbouring church is almost always

[Amberly Castle.]

worth looking at; and Amberly is not an exception. The nave of Amberly church is Norman, the chancel of the early English style; and there is a Norman arch between the nave and chancel richly carved. In the chancel is an enamelled sepulchral plate, in memory of John Wantly, who died in 1424; he is represented in a curious surcoat or tabard, on which his arms are worked. It is figured in Stothard's 'Monumental Effigies.' In situation Amberly is highly picturesque; the village runs along the rock, on the ridge of which the church and castle are constructed, and though rather a poor place in itself, will catch the attention of one observant of such objects. Fuller, as we have seen, speaks of "an Amerley trout" as one of the famous things of Sussex; but Dallaway will have it they are not trout at all, but salmon, which are still taken in the Arun here, though not in plenty; nor, according to him, are they very fine. Amberly is now somewhat celebrated for its cranberries; a great deal of peat is also procured here. Parham Hill, not far from Amberly, commands an extensive prospect in every direction; in clear weather the Isle of Wight is distinctly seen. From Amberly and Parham there is a way along the top of the downs (the road runs somewhat lower) to Steyning, that can hardly be surpassed for wide and various prospects throughout the South-down district. We have often, and always with new delight, gone along this ridge, passing by the Devil's Dyke to Lewes. But now we must descend to our river, and at Amberly we quit the South-downs.

On leaving Amberly a bye-way may be taken over the meadows to Hardham. It is scarcely worth

while to keep by the river to that place, as there is nothing attractive along it, and it leads us much out of our direction. The path to Hardham is not a very easy one for a stranger to find, but he will meet with some countrymen—and the Sussex peasantry are among the civilest of our peasantry, and neat hands at pointing out the way—so much so indeed, that it is hardly worth while carrying a map in rambling through this county. At Hardham there was a priory of Black Canons, founded in the reign of Henry III.; some slight remains of the building, converted into a farmhouse, still exist in the meadows opposite the church; they have little to interest about them. Hardham church is small, and not remarkable in any respect; the several historians of Sussex—Dallaway, Horsfield, and Shoberl—say that there is in the churchyard a yew-tree whose trunk, hollow from age, measures twenty-four feet in circumference at the height of four feet from the ground; but there is certainly no such tree there now, nor any appearance of any such having recently existed. From the river Arun at Hardham a tunnel is carried, for the purposes of navigation, to the Rother, which river it meets near Stopham. The Arun itself winds round by Pulborough, where are some remains of a large mansion, called Old Place; it belonged to the Apsley family, and was erected in the reign of Henry VI. It was a handsome edifice, partly timber, with numerous large square and bay windows; it enclosed a courtyard, and must have been a place of some consequence. Very little of it is now standing, and that is in a defaced and patched condition, it being used as a cottage. Between Pulborough and Stopham the Arun is joined by

the Rother; and here the rambler, instead of pursuing the Arun to its source, or taking the canal which unites it to the Wey, neither of which presents many attractions, will do well to leave it altogether, and reach the Wey by a far more pleasant route—namely, by following the Rother past Petworth and Easebourne, and then along some bye-roads, and over the Hampshire hills to Selborne, the locality of Gilbert White's delightful book, and from thence to the source of the Wey, near Alton. This is a delightful stroll—some parts of it are almost unequalled in their way.

We will first point out the course of the Arun, for those who may prefer to follow it, and then return and take the route here laid down. From Pulborough, until it reaches Billinghurst, there is nothing that we need mention along its banks. At Wisborough-green there is a church on a hill, with a tall shingle spire, that will serve us for a long distance as a landmark. Here, as about most of the commons in this county, the parish cricketers may sometimes be seen; and every one who likes to look at a genuine English game, played in its best manner, will do well to observe Sussex cricketers wherever he may meet with them. Well-made, active men, with sinews hard as iron, yet supple as well-tempered steel, firm-handed, and lynx-eyed, they seem modelled for cricketers; and they are perhaps the most skilful cricketers in England. We do not mean the professional players, though the Sussex "eleven" are probably more than a match for the "eleven" of any other county, but the ordinary countrymen, whose enjoyment of the game is intense and hearty, and free from the sordidness of the professional hands.

Billinghurst is a pretty village, with a village church situated on rising ground—just such a rural church as an English landscape painter delights to paint. Then there is a comfortable public-house, where you may have a rasher of bacon cooked in true Sussex style—that is, by spreading some of the glowing wood-ashes upon the hearth, and then placing the said rasher on a gridiron over them; you thus get just a delicate smack of the woody flavour imparted to the bacon, and it is as neat a relish as a hungry walker can desire — Cobbett could not have wished for a better slice of bacon than may be got here.* But Cobbett was at Billinghurst, and we will see what he says about it, that we may say a few words about him. We shall have frequent occasion in the following portions of this paper to mention Cobbett's name, which is closely associated with that part of the country we are to pass over, and we may as well say what we intend about him at once. Our extract will aptly introduce a few remarks, it being a fair sample of his style—we mean, of his mode of describing country places and manners, for we have nought to do here with his politics or political writings. "I got to Billinghurst," he writes, "to breakfast, about seven o'clock. A very pretty village, and a very nice breakfast, in a very neat little parlour of

* The reader may perhaps remember Cobbett's emphatic remark, that he who cannot eat fat bacon and drink milk for breakfast is only fit for an hospital. Cobbett, in his 'Rural Rides,' is continually referring to his baconian propensity—he stopped, for instance, at an inn at Ashurst, in this county, and was shocked to find there was no bacon: now, he says, "the want of bacon made me fear as to a bed;" so he set off, in the midst of a soaking rain, hoping to find more hospitable entertainment in the next village.

a very decent public-house. The landlady sent her son to get me some cream, and he was just such a chap as I was at his age, and dressed just in the same sort of way, his main garment being a blue smock-frock, faded from wear, and mended with pieces of new stuff, and of course not faded. The sight of this smock-frock brought to my mind many things very dear to me. This boy will, I dare say, perform his part at Billinghurst, or at some place not far from it. If accident had not taken me from a similar scene, how many villains and fools, who have been well teased and tormented, would have slept in peace at night and fearlessly swaggered about by day! When I look at this little chap—at his smock-frock, his nailed shoes, and his clean, plain, and coarse shirt, I ask myself will anything, I wonder, ever send this chap across the ocean, to tackle the base, corrupt, perjured, Republican judges of Pennsylvania? Will this little, lively, but at the same time simple boy, ever become the terror of villains and hypocrites across the Atlantic?" and so on, for when he bursts out in a scolding vein, he does not stop in a hurry. Cobbett's influence as a political writer is, we suppose, now pretty nearly exhausted; but the book from which we have made the above and following extracts is one that is well worth reading. A solitary pedestrian or equestrian can hardly choose a pleasanter book for a companion through the counties it illustrates than Cobbett's 'Rural Rides in Surrey, Sussex, &c.' It is free, fresh, and hearty. The country breeze stirs every page of it. He wrote the letters which make up the volume while in the places they describe, and they are free from every taint of the "wen," as he

oddly calls London. There is no trimming about them; they are straightforward, sturdy, and intensely characteristic. His enjoyment of the country is thorough, his observations on men and things are keen and shrewd; while alongside all runs a constant current of egotism of the most amusing kind. Nothing can check it, and everything else is influenced by it. In every picture it is in the foreground. There is, too, a sense of enjoyment about every part, that creates a feeling of enjoyment in the reader. But it must not be supposed that we agree with Cobbett's conclusions. We are as far from acquiescing in his decisions on scenery, or the beautiful, as we are in his notions on politics, religion, history, or literature. His prejudices are astounding, and generally in proportion to his ignorance; though that is the common case, for prejudices, as Joseph Glanvill says, "are the rattles of immature intellects; but the advanced reasons have outgrown them;" and with all his natural sagacity, and the really large amount of observation and information he had acquired, Cobbett remained in many things a dogged Hampshire peasant to the last. He saw clearly as far as he did see, but his circle of vision was not a very wide one; he saw all around distinctly enough, but the past and the future were in a mist, and all that belonged to them was either unseen or distorted beyond its proper size, and its connexion and sequence were lost. But with all his blunders and wild dislikings—and he *was* "a good hater"—the work we are speaking of will afford a rich fund of entertainment, and perhaps start some seasonable reflections; and it will certainly lead one who is passing over the ground it describes to notice a

hundred things worth noticing, but which he would pass by unnoticed if he had not such a companion. Yet, as we said, we do not wish it to be thought that we agree with him as to the *beautiful* in the places he mentions. We have looked at most of the spots he dilates on as the most beautiful, and we would not now go five yards out of our way to look at another because he praises it. His tastes are all of the *association* kind. A flourishing scene is a beautiful scene. Well-tilled fields, clean corn, neat hedges, good roads, sound buildings, fat cattle —these make up his ideas of the beautiful. All his feelings are those of a farmer; yet there is in the expression of them a genuineness, a heartiness, that makes everything brighten under their influence.

From Billinghurst the river pursues a tortuous course towards Loxwood, near which place it quits the Arun navigation, and winds away past Slinfold and Horsham to its source in St. Leonard's Forest. The canal, connecting the Arun with the Wey, leaves Sussex about two miles beyond Loxwood, and joins the latter river about midway between Godalming and Guildford. It passes through a pleasant country; but as there is nothing to call for particular notice, we may at once cross over by Hascombe Hill, where are some traces of a Roman encampment, and a fine view, to Godalming, and there join the Wey, which is exceedingly pretty thereabout. We will now return to Pulborough, and follow the course we marked out above. The Rother, with which we start as a guide, does not run very close to Petworth, and there is a nearer way to that town from Pulborough. After crossing the bridge, take the road on the left, just under

Pulborough church; this leads past Stopham, where is a little Norman church pleasantly situated on a hill, with a fine yew in the churchyard and a noble prospect from the hill above. Frittleworth and Egdean have next to be passed, and then Petworth is soon reached. The way is not long, and is very pleasant: two or three field-paths may be taken, which will somewhat lessen the distance.

Petworth is a thoroughly respectable, clean town: the houses are well built, and the public buildings are substantial edifices. Much of the present appearance of Petworth is due to the munificence of the late Earl of Egremont, who expended above 15,000*l.* upon its improvement. The church, which he almost rebuilt, has a tall spire, more recent than the church, and a sort of imitation of that of Salisbury Cathedral; from its height, and from the church standing on elevated ground, it is seen over a wide circuit. The fine mansion of the Earl of Egremont (now occupied by Colonel Wyndham) is the grand attraction at Petworth. Cobbett, in his 'Rural Rides' (p. 65), thus speaks of it:—"Lord Egremont's house is close to the town, and, with its outbuildings, garden-walls, and other erections, is perhaps *nearly as big as the town*, though the town is not a small one. The park is very fine, and consists of a parcel of those hills and dells which Nature formed here when she was in one of her most sportive moods. I have never seen the earth flung about in such a wild way as round about Hindhead and Blackdown; and this park forms a part of this ground." The park is very extensive, its walls being more than twelve miles in circumference. The house, which is comparatively recent, is not to be praised for the ele-

gance of its architecture, yet its size renders it imposing; and some conception of its size may be formed from the fact of there being, in the front of the house, twenty-one windows in a line to each story, and there are three of these stories. But the magnificence of the interior fully compensates for what may be wanting in the exterior; and permission to view it is most freely and liberally given. We regret that our limits prevent us describing the place somewhat fully; but we must not forget that we are already diverging a little from the line we marked out, and shall therefore only mention two or three of the leading features—just sufficient, we hope, to induce the rambler who may be in the vicinity to visit it. As might be expected from the size of the house, there are a great many rooms, and nearly all of them have some objects of art of considerable attraction. It would evidently be vain to attempt even to name the various rooms; but there is one we must mention. This is a magnificent apartment, sixty feet long, twenty-four wide, and twenty high, and is generally called "the carved room," from its being profusely adorned with the carvings of the famous Grinling Gibbons. This room is probably unmatched for its carved-work in the world, and no one who has not seen it can form a conception of the exuberant fancy and exquisite skill of that prince of wood-carvers; and once seen, it can never be forgotten. Festoons of flowers, fruits, shells, birds, foliage in every variety and play of line, with vases graceful as Grecian artists ever moulded, are suspended from the walls and ceilings in endless combinations. There is a painful interest attached to one of the finest of these festoons,

inasmuch as Gibbons's favourite pupil, Selden, lost his life in rescuing it from a fire which occurred here while the work was in progress. As we have said, the fertility of Gibbons's fancy is amazing. Gilpin, we believe, lamented that Gibbons was not born in an age of Gothic architecture: and all who look on his works will feel that his marvellous wildness of invention could only in such an age have had full scope. It must be admitted that his luxuriant foliage and endless diversities of form appear a little incongruous within the stiff walls of a classic room. In looking at the carvings —so mechanical and pattern-like—of the present day, one cannot but regret that he is not alive to fitly use the noble opportunity afforded by our new Houses of Parliament. Other rooms at Petworth are also adorned with his carvings; and altogether the collection of them far surpasses any other in England. We ought to mention that an artist has been for some time here, fitting up every portion unoccupied with the works of Gibbons, that is suitable to be so adorned, with carvings; and his productions are very beautiful and admirably executed, though they do not approach those of Gibbons in originality or fertility of invention, or richness of fancy.

These rooms also contain a large number of antique statues, collected for the then Earl of Egremont by Gavin Hamilton, at Rome, between 1750 and 1760. They were, when purchased, for the most part in a mutilated condition, but were restored by the addition of noses, fingers, hands, feet, and sometimes even larger members, by two Italian sculptors, Cavacippi and Pacilli, much in request for that kind of skill, very fashionable

about that time. There is, too, an interesting selection of works by English sculptors, made chiefly by the late Earl. Among them are Flaxman's almost sublime group of 'Satan and the archangel Michael,' a work unequalled in English sculpture; and his graceful 'Pastoral Apollo.' Then there are other statues by Carew, &c., with busts by Nollekens, Chantrey, and others famous in that line of art. There is also an excellent collection of paintings by Claude, Cuyp, Rubens, and others of the old masters; and an unmatched series of portraits of the Percies by Vandyke and others. The Vandykes at Petworth are famous all the world over. We ought to have observed, in speaking of the "carved room," that it contains a great many fine portraits and other pictures in the carved, and of course ungilt, frames of Gibbons. Besides the paintings by the old masters, the late Earl, the most munificent patron English artists ever had, formed a fine collection of works by English painters. Among them are several by Reynolds, Gainsborough, Romsey, Fuseli, Hilton, Leslie, Callcott, and Turner. There is perhaps no other collection, except his own, that contains so many of Turner's pictures; and the selection is a most choice one, displaying almost every variety of his style, from the Claude-like quiet of his earliest productions, to the exuberant splendour of his later. Few who only know him from the singular and extravagant works he now yearly displays at the Royal Academy Exhibition, will be prepared for the sober and classic grace of those they will see by him at Petworth; and scarce any will unite with his thorough-going admirers in accounting his latest works his best.

The number of works of art and taste at Petworth is so great as almost to bewilder the visitor; they not merely fill a gallery, but crowd every room. We should like to talk awhile beside some of the pictures and statues, but we must not venture; if we began, we could not break off in a few sentences, and we must be as brief as possible in this paper. We can assure our readers, that if they desire to examine a large, varied, and excellent collection of works of art, they cannot do better than visit Petworth. There is also shown a curious chapel, belonging to the old mansion; it is the burial-place of the Percies, to whom Petworth formerly belonged. When the Percies became extinct, Petworth passed by marriage to Charles Seymour, Duke of Somerset, and by his second daughter to the Wyndhams, in which family it remains.

There is some delightful scenery about Petworth; it is more abrupt and varied than that we have hitherto passed over, and may indeed be fitly styled romantic. The Rother soon brings us to Easebourne, which is little more than three miles from Petworth, if the west road be followed. At Easebourne is Cowdry Park, in which are the remains of a mansion erected in the reign of Henry VIII., and at one time one of the most magnificent in the kingdom: in it Edward VI. was "honourably entertained by Sir Anthony Browne," in 1547, and Elizabeth with much magnificence by Lord Montacute (Montague), in 1591. An account of the ceremonies attending the reception of Elizabeth, with the verses with which she was greeted, was published at the time. The old mansion was preserved with due care and an honourable

pride till the year 1793, when it was destroyed by a fire that occurred through some negligence of the servants left in charge of the house. Lord Montague was at the time travelling on the Continent, and his return being shortly expected, the house was being set in order; the portraits, of which there was a collection of great interest, had been removed from the rooms in which they commonly hung into the north gallery, and this gallery was, on the night of September 24th, discovered to be on fire, but too late to save any of the valuable contents. Attempts were made to detach this part of the building from the remainder, but the solid state of the masonry rendered it impracticable. On the morrow, little more than a few bare walls were left standing. Beside the portraits we have mentioned, there were a good many other pictures in various rooms, some of which were saved, but the greater part were destroyed. On the walls of one of the apartments were some curious paintings in fresco, illustrative of events in English history in which the family had been concerned, and a curious pictorial chronicle of the leading occurrences in the life of Sir Anthony Browne; these, with a representation of the reception of Elizabeth, were also lost. The noble owner of the mansion never heard of his loss. The intelligence was of course immediately sent to the Continent to him, but before it reached him he had, by a terrible accident, lost his life. In company with Sedley Burdett (the brother of the late Sir Francis) he attempted to pass the falls of Schaffhausen in a boat, and both were drowned, October, 1793. In the 'Annual Register,' 1793, there is a full account of the fire; and the 'Vetusta Monumenta,

[Gateway at Cowdry.]

vol. iii., contains four engravings of Cowdry House as it appeared before the fire, with a list of the paintings saved. We give an engraving of the present appearance of the grand entrance. The ruins have been, with good taste, suffered to remain undisturbed. The new house is built at a short distance from them; it is not an elegant fabric. In the park, which was laid out by Capability Brown, are some very large trees, especially oak and chestnut, with some firs of great height. Easebourne Church, which is a neat little rustic edifice, stands in the park.

After leaving Cowdry the Rother flows past Midhurst, the birth-place of the unfortunate Otway, whose tale is one of the saddest in the history of genius. His remains lie in the little church of the adjoining parish of Woolbeeding. Here we may turn somewhat to the right over the high grounds which separate the counties of Sussex and Hampshire. This portion of our journey offers us quite a change in the character of the scenery. Before us we see the wide sandy heath called Wolmer Forest, with its lakes and the "hangers" in the extreme west. We are coming now into the region Gilbert White has made classical. Wolmer Forest lies a little on the right of our direct road; but few will pass near it without at least proceeding as far as Wolmer Pond. The forest is a treeless one—at least it has no indigenous trees: some plantations of larch and fir have been formed upon it. It is a large heath rather than a forest, and abounds in the various ericas, which take off somewhat of its dreariness when in bloom. Yet though the forest is generally spoken of as dreary, the pedestrian will not quarrel with the variation it affords to the scenery he has been traversing—that is, if he be merely crossing it—if he pursue its long seven miles and then the two miles of its "sister forest," Alice Holt, he will be ready to join in the cry against its dullness. Wolmer Pond is, as Gilbert White says, "a vast lake for this part of the world, containing, in its whole circumference, 2646 yards, or very nearly a mile and a half." It wants the accompanying mountains of the northern meres, but is a picturesque object, and an agreeable relief to the long reach of heath. In winter it swarms with aquatic

Gilbert White's House, Selborne.]

birds. There are several other of these ponds about the forest, but none near so large as this. Turning now somewhat to the left through Empshott and under some of the hangers, after a delightful walk of about three miles we reach Selborne. If any of our readers have not read the 'Natural History of Selborne,' they cannot do better than read it at the first opportunity. It may be purchased at almost any price, and is by far the best parish history contained in our language—of its kind, indeed, the most delightful book we possess. In speaking of Selborne, then, we shall suppose the reader to be acquainted with the History, and thus spare ourselves and them some considerable quantum of description. White has fully described all that is interesting about the

place, and it would be a folly in us to attempt a repetition of what he has so well done. Gilbert White was born at Selborne, and though he took honours at Oxford and became a Fellow of his College, his attachment to his birthplace was so strong that he declined every offer of a college living, and settled down to a quiet life of study in his native village, of which during the last few years of his life he officiated as curate. He was a close observer of nature, and his History of Selborne is the result of his observations and investigations. It is literally the Note-book of an out-door naturalist. The transparent clearness of his style and the novelty of much of the information it contains, made the work a popular one from the first, and it still retains its popularity. He has made that pleasant reading as well as instructive, which generally requires all the aid its usefulness can impart to make it readable at all. Selborne is a remarkable place, and well repaid the regard he bestowed upon it, yet a stranger might pass through it without suspecting there was anything extraordinary about it. It needs, like some human beings, time to bring out its excellencies, and it increases with acquaintance—no one would say of it what Slender said of Ann Page. We cannot do better, by way of giving some notion of the character of the place, than quote White's account of it:—"The soils of this district are almost as various and diversified as the views and aspects. The high part to the south-west consists of a vast hill of chalk, rising three hundred feet above the village; and is divided into a sheep-down, the high wood, and a long hanging wood called the Hanger. The covert of this eminence is altogether beech, the most lovely of all forest trees, whether we con-

sider its smooth rind, or bark, its glossy foliage, or graceful pendulous boughs. The down, or sheep-walk, is a pleasing park-like spot, of about one mile by half that space, jutting out on the verge of the hill-country, where it begins to break down into the plains, and commanding a very engaging view, being an assemblage of hill, dale, woodlands, heath, and water. The prospect is bounded to the south-east and east by the vast range of mountains called the Sussex Downs, by Guild-down near Guildford, and by the downs round Dorking and Ryegate in Surrey, to the north-east; which altogether, with the country beyond Alton and Farnham, form a noble and extensive outline. At the foot of this hill, one stage, or step, from the uplands, lies the village, which consists of one single straggling street, three-quarters of a mile in length, in a sheltered vale, and running parallel with the Hanger." Selborne, as we have remarked, will repay a leisurely examination, and there is a neat little inn just opposite the old house in which White lived, and close to the Plestor of which he speaks, where the visitor will meet with comfortable accommodation and very moderate charges. The landlord will provide the visitor too with a copy of the excellent edition of White's work, which the late lamented Mr. Bennett edited, though he died before it was published. Mr. Bennett stayed here some time while preparing his notes to the History, and was so delighted with Selborne, that his brother says he had determined to seek a retreat in the neighbourhood. Our landlord's copy of the work is a presentation copy, "in pursuance of Mr. Bennett's last wishes," as an inscription in the fly-leaf informs us. Selborne appears to be very little changed since White wrote—some fifty or

sixty years back. The plestor, or play-place, near the church, remains unencroached upon—the site of the old oak being occupied by a fine maple. The churchyard still contains its majestic yew, which White states to be twenty-four feet in girth—it is now much larger and still healthy. The church has not been adorned—only a new parsonage appears to have been erected. White's own house, a plain brick building, is still standing—it is now in the fitting occupation of Mr. Bell, the distinguished naturalist. The Hangers, the Lythes, the roads, even the people appear quite unchanged. The masons too still embellish their houses in the same way.* It is seldom that we can thus alight on a spot made familiar to our boyish fancy in some favourite book, and find it still the same. We might linger here long—and if our readers like White's book half as well as we do, we should not fear to tire them by speaking at some length of the place, but our paper warns us that we have tarried long enough already, and we can only further add, that a day or two spent at Selborne will be found full of interest in the retrospect as well as at the time. Our way to Alton lies through one of those remarkable lanes he has so admirably and so truly described. "Among the singularities of this place, the two rocky hollow lanes, the one to Alton and the other to the forest,

* From a notion of rendering their work the more elegant, and giving it a finish, masons chip this stone (the dark forest sandstone) into small fragments about the size of the head of a large nail, and then stick the pieces into the wet mortar along the joints of their freestone walls. This embellishment carries an odd appearance, and has occasioned strangers sometimes to ask us pleasantly, "Whether we fastened our walls together with tenpenny nails?"—WHITE

deserve our attention. These roads, running through the malm lands, are, by the traffic of ages and the fretting of water, worn down through the first stratum of our freestone, and partly through the second; so that they look more like watercourses than roads; and are bedded with naked rag for furlongs together. In many places they are reduced sixteen or eighteen feet beneath the level of the fields; and after floods and in frosts exhibit very grotesque and wild appearances, from the tangled roots that are twisted among the strata, and from the torrents rushing down their broken sides; and especially when those cascades are frozen into icicles hanging in all the fanciful shapes of frost-work. These rugged gloomy scenes affright the ladies when they peep down into them from the paths above, and make timid horsemen shudder while they ride along them; but they delight the naturalist with their various botany, and particularly with their curious filices, with which they abound."

There is nothing very remarkable about Alton. Like most of the smaller towns in Hampshire, it has a dull appearance; it has no buildings that would be looked at a second time, and has no associations that need detain us. Alton ale has long been famous, and lately the inhabitants of London have had opportunities of testing it in almost every leading street. We cannot speak to its qualities as supplied in the metropolis, but it is certainly very good as it is to be obtained in its native place. The source of the Wey is about a mile south-west of Alton. The river flows through the town, but is a very small stream for a long while after it quits it. There is not much to speak of

for the next few miles of its course. Froyle, which lies a little above it, on the left of the Farnham road, is a picturesque building of the time of James I., or Charles, and the rambler should turn aside to look at it. The vale between Alton and Farnham is exceedingly fertile, and though not remarkably beautiful, is a very pleasant one to traverse. Cobbett's account of it is, perhaps, worth quoting, as it is his birthplace. "Arthur Young calls the vale between Farnham and Alton *the finest ten miles* in England. Here is a river with fine meadows on each side of it, and with rising grounds on each outside of the meadows, those grounds having some hop-gardens and some pretty woods. But though I was born in this vale, I must confess that the ten miles between Maidstone and Tunbridge (which the Kentish folk call the *Garden of Eden*) is a great deal finer; for here, with a river three times as big, and a vale three times as broad, not only hop-gardens and beautiful woods, but immense orchards of apples, pears, plums, cherries, and filberts, and these, in many cases, with gooseberries and currants, and raspberries beneath; and all taken together, this vale is really worthy of the appellation it bears. This spot Cobbett "believes to be the very finest as to fertility and diminutive beauty, in this whole world." In this, however, we must take leave to dissent somewhat; we say nothing of its fertility, but neither in "diminutive beauty" nor any other beauty is it worthy to be compared for a moment with thousands of places in this little island, let alone "this whole world." Before reaching Farnham we pass the village of Bentley, which we mention in order to direct the reader's attention to

it; it is one of the very prettiest little places of its kind we know of; it would have made the fortune of a Dutch painter who should have been so lucky as to light upon it. The Wey passes just outside Farnham, a town of some importance, but which we have not now time to turn aside to examine. There are a great many hop-gardens in the neighbourhood; Farnham hops always fetch the highest price in the market. Our river soon after passes by Bourne, where may be seen the sand-hill which Cobbett speaks of as playing a rather important part in his "education." After saying that he worked in a hop-garden here when from eight to ten years old, he goes on—"but the most interesting thing was a *sand-hill*, which goes from a part of the heath down to the rivulet. As a due mixture of pleasure with toil, I, with two brothers, used occasionally to disport ourselves, as the lawyers call it, at this sand-hill. Our diversion was this: we used to go to the top of a hill which was steeper than the roof of a house; one used to draw his arms out of the sleeves of his smock-frock, and lay himself down with his arms by his sides; and then the others, one at head and the other at feet, sent him rolling down the hill like a barrel or a log of wood. By the time he got to the bottom, his hair, eyes, ears, nose, and mouth were all full of this loose sand; then the others took their turn, and at every roll there was a monstrous spell of laughter .... this was the spot where I was receiving my *education;* and this was the sort of education: and I am perfectly satisfied that if I had not received such an education, or something very much like it—that if I had been brought up a milksop, with a nursery-maid

everlastingly at my heels, I should have been at this day as great a fool, as inefficient a mortal, as any of those frivolous idiots that are turned out from Winchester and Westminster schools, or from any of those dens of dunces called Colleges and Universities." It would be idle to say a word in confutation of the wild folly of this last sentence. No doubt there are enough "inefficient mortals," and enough "frivolous idiots" too, turned out from our great public schools; but many of the noblest men our country can boast of, have been trained in them; and how many who have received the same sand-hill education as our author, have never advanced further than to thump a flail and swallow fat bacon, have lived and died with as few intelligent ideas as the hogs they cut up!

The course of the Wey now becomes exceedingly erratic: and it is hardly worth while to pursue its windings. We may as well proceed at once to Godalming, which is a long, quiet, and rather dull town, with some old houses and an oldish church. In the church Manning, the historian of Surrey, to whom we have been somewhat indebted in this paper, and much more in that on the Mole, is interred. A singular circumstance is related to have occurred to him when at the University of Cambridge. He had a severe attack of small-pox, and was supposed to have died, and had actually been laid out for interment, when his father determined, as he said, to "give his son another chance," raised him up, and by the motion produced signs of life; proper means were resorted to, and he recovered. It was at Godalming that Mary Toft practised her strange deception, and more strangely managed to deceive some men who ought to have

been wiser than to be so easily duped. She pretended to have been delivered of several live rabbits, and Mr. St. André, surgeon and anatomist to the royal household, published a pamphlet in support of her assertions, with engravings of the rabbits "taken from life." Hogarth issued a satirical print on the occasion, entitled 'Cuniculariі, or the wise men of Godliman * in Consultation:' the principal figures are St. André and a Mr. Howard, a surgeon of Guildford, who acted a prominent part on the occasion. St. André was a quack, and not a very scrupulous personage, though he was no doubt deceived in this affair; but at least one physician of eminence in London supported her veracity besides him, and the tale was so generally credited, that rabbits were for some time excluded from every dinner-table.

It would be too bad, as we have quoted from Cobbett, not to give his account of the road from Godalming to Guildford, though we do not mean to adopt it. "Everybody that has been from Godalming to Guildford knows that there is hardly another such a pretty four miles in England. The road is good; the soil is good; the houses are neat; the people are neat; the hills, the woods, the meadows, all are beautiful. Nothing wild and bold, to be sure, but exceedingly pretty; and it is almost impossible to ride along these four miles without feelings of pleasure, though you have rain for your companion, as it happened to be with me." We recommend the passage following this, about the valley of Chilworth, as a pretty sample of Cobbett's manner of running a tilt when anything brings to his mind Jews or Quakers, stockbrokers,

* This is the provincial mode of pronouncing Godalming.

or Portuguese, Scotch *fee*losophers, or extreme unction, as he strangely names what he at other times more mildly calls the "infamous potato."

About a mile before reaching Guildford, on a high sand-hill on the left of the road, and overlooking the river, are the ruins of St. Catherine's chapel, of which we give an engraving. They are in situation and appearance eminently picturesque,

[St. Catherine's Chapel.]

and the style of the architecture is somewhat graceful. It has been an elegant little building, but is now left to the bats and the owls. It appears to have been erected by Henry II., as a place of worship for the tenantry of his manor of Ertindon, after he had detached it from that of Godalming. Having fallen to decay, it was rebuilt in the twenty-ninth year of the reign of Edward I., by Richard de Wauncey, rector of St. Nicholas, Guildford. Some proceedings at law followed, to determine the right of the rector of St. Nicholas to hold it, and his tenure was declared to be illegal. At what time it fell into disuse and became ruinous is not known. A fair is held on the hill yearly. From the foot of St. Catherine's Hill, a short mile along the side of the Wey will bring us to Guildford, which being situated on irregular ground, with many large houses and two or three venerable churches, and the keep of the old castle overlooking all the rest, has a striking appearance. Cobbett says, "The town of Guildford (taken with its environs) I, who have seen so many, many towns, think the prettiest, and, taken altogether, the most agreeable and most happy looking that I ever saw in my life. Here are hill and dale in endless variety. Here are the chalk and the sand, vieing with each other in making beautiful scenes. Here are a navigable river and fine meadows. Here are woods and downs. Here is something of everything but *fat marshes* and their skeleton-making agues." Guildford has the appearance of a place of business, but is said to be far less flourishing than before the opening of the South-Western Railway. It has two or three buildings worth looking at, as perhaps are also the churches, but the only edifice we shall stay to mention is the

castle. The keep, which is almost the only portion left, stands on the brow of a steep hill; it is square, and built of flints and rubble, with sandstone as dressings, and in triple rows alternately with flints. The external angles are faced with Caen stone. It is in tolerable preservation, though not sufficiently so to be of any service. Neither the name of its founder nor the date of its erection is known. King, in his 'Munimenta Antiqua,' vol. iii., has described it at length, and given views and ground plans of it; he states it to be of Saxon architecture, as indeed he does all square keeps, but it is now pretty generally agreed that the square keeps were rather characteristic of Norman castles. It is probably one of the best preserved of the early Norman keeps. We may just mention two or three of the most prominent circumstances connected with its history. In 1306 it was the scene of a sanguinary transaction. Harold, the son of Canute, by his first marriage, had taken possession of the throne, in violation of the settlement Canute made on his marriage with Emma of Normandy, by which the crown was to descend to her issue by Canute. Her son Edward first made an unsuccessful attempt to dispossess Harold of the throne; and afterwards, as Sir J. Mackintosh tells us, "his brother Alfred, having received a letter of invitation to renew the attempt, which purported to be from his mother, yielded to what he considered so promising a proposition. Alfred was the dupe of the forgery, which seems to have been a snare laid by Harold. He landed with a small body of six hundred men, who, being taken prisoners in the night, were brought out on the next morning, and ranged in a line with their hands tied behind them. Sixty of them were enlarged, a few kept for slaves

the rest were destroyed, after being mutilated or dismembered, according to the capricious ferocity of the soldiers. Prince Alfred was soon after blinded, probably by burning out his eyes; an operation which, performed by such hands, was not likely to leave any need for the aid of an assassin." ('Hist. of England,' i. 63.) Goodwin, Harold's chief minister, held the castle at this time, and was his agent in this affair; and he it was who decoyed Alfred here, and then so barbarously slaughtered his followers in the streets of Guildford. The prince was carried to Gillingham in Kent, where his eyes were put out; after this he was conveyed to Ely, where he died in the extremest agony, aggravated, it is said, by the hard fare and ill usage of his new gaolers, the monks of Ely. King John spent his Christmas here in 1201, in much splendour. According to Holinshed, he gave his servants many fine liveries, in which he was somewhat imprudently rivalled by the Archbishop of Canterbury, who was at the castle at the same time. "Each strove which should surpass the other in such sumptuous apparelling of their men; whereat the king (and not without good cause) was greatly moved to indignation against him, although for a time he concealed the same." There is an old ballad in Percy's 'Reliques,' which may have been written from some reference to this story. A few lines of it may serve to relieve the dullness of these details. It is entitled 'King John and the Abbot of Canterburye,' and promises to—

> "Tell you a storye, a storye so merrye
> Concerning the abbot of Canterburye,
> How, for his housekeeping and high renowne,
> They rode poste for him to faire London towne."

If it be as the writer goes on to tell us, it was "not without good cause" that John marvelled, and was angry at his pride; for—

> "An hundred men the king did heare say,
> The abbot kept in his house every day;
> And fifty gold chaines, without any doubt,
> In velvet coates waited the abbot about."

The king received the poor abbot very ungraciously, and told him that his extravagance led him to fear he worked treason against his crown. This the abbot resolutely denies, and wishes it may be known he "never spends nothing but what is his own," and hopes he shall not be molested for "spending his own true-gotten geare." But the king, who, as the writer tells us, "did great wrong and maintained little right," will not be so easily pacified, replies—

> "Yes, yes, father abbot, thy fault it is highe,
> And now for the same thou needest must dye;
> For except thou canst answer me questions three,
> Thy head shall be smitten from thy bodie.
>
> And first quo' the king, when I 'm in this stead
> [state, dignity],
> With my crown of gold so fair on my head,
> Among all my liege men so noble of birth,
> Thou must tell me to one pennie what I am worth.
>
> Secondly, tell me without any doubte,
> How soon I may ride the whole world aboute;
> And at the third question thou must not shrink,
> But tell me truly what I do think."

"O these are harde questions for my shallowe witt," stammers out the poor abbot, and confessing his inability to answer them at once, he begs for three weeks' space, when he says "he 'll do his endeavours" to find the proper replies. To this the king accedes, but warns him at parting that

that is the longest time he has to live; if he does not answer his questions, his lands and his livings will be forfeit.

"Away rode the abbot all sad at that word,
And he rode to Cambridge and Oxenford;
But never a doctor was there so wise
That could with his learning an answer devise."

"Then," continues the ballad, "home rode the abbot of comfort so cold,"—and no wonder; but we will not spoil the tale by telling how his shepherd undertakes to simulate him at the court, and how he manages to get him out of his trouble by furnishing answers which his majesty is forced to admit—all this may be found in Percy, and thither we send the curious for a solution of their curiosity, giving meanwhile, to those who have not met with the ballad, an opportunity to try if they, wiser than the doctors of Cambridge and Oxenford, can with *their* learning devise an answer.

Guildford Castle was one of the places seized by the Dauphin Louis in his contest with John. In the reign of Edward I. it was converted into a prison. There used to be shown a large dungeon, but it is now bricked up. Among the eminent men born at Guildford was George Abbot, archbishop of Canterbury in the reigns of James I. and Charles I. He lived in eventful days, and his influence in the church was great and useful in checking the intolerance of Laud. But he is more remarkable for his personal history, and even his birth has something of the marvellous in it, if old Aubrey is to be trusted; not a very safe guide, we fear, in such a matter. According to him, Abbot's mother dreamt before his birth that if she were to catch a pike and eat it, the child would be a son who would rise to great dignity. This dream she

[Guildford Castle.]

related to her gossips, who only laughed at it; and she gave no further heed to the matter. A few days afterwards she went down to the river to get a bucket of water, and on drawing up the bucket was astonished to see that she had caught a pike in it. Remembering her dream, she immediately took it home, dressed it and eat it; and in process of

time her son did come to the dignity we have mentioned.

The ridge of downs from Guildford to Farnham, called the "Hog's Back," is very lofty, and affords a series of noble prospects. We have in our paper on the Mole mentioned the same ridge as it extends in the opposite direction between Guildford and Dorking. The whole range from Croydon to Farnham, indeed, may be said to yield a succession of views far surpassing anything else of the kind within the same distance from London.

At Guildford we may leave the Wey for awhile, and rejoin it at Stoke, a delightful little place, with a fine park, and a handsome church in the perpendicular style; the tower is tall, and built of flints and stone; in it is a large door with an elegant window over it. In the church is a monument to the memory of Charlotte Smith, a once popular writer, though now almost forgotten. The scenery about this neighbourhood, and for some miles farther up the river, is extremely pleasing; we have indeed left the hilly ground, but these meadows are gay and various, and now and then we come upon a neat little cottage, and all along are plenty of trees. The river, too, is enlivened by the occasional passage of a barge, or, what is more picturesque, a timber-raft drawn by a horse or two, and guided by a sturdy steersman, who steps from one to another of the large blocks, and, while he skilfully balances himself, directs the movements of the raft.

Our river is here separated into several streams, but the towing-path must be followed. We pass by Sutton Place, celebrated for having been visited by Queen Elizabeth, and soon after reach Woking; but there is nothing there need detain us. It is

only notable as the nursery of Henry VIII. About a mile beyond Woking are the remains of Newark Priory, delightfully situated in a meadow on the left bank of our river. Bishop Tanner, in his 'Notitia Monastica,' says that "at Aldbury, afterwards called Newark New Place, or De Novo Loco juxta Guildford, in the time of King Richard the First, or before, Ruald de Calver and Beatrix de Sandes his wife built a church of Black Canons to the honour of the Blessed Virgin Mary and St. Thomas of Canterbury" (rather an odd association, by the way). There is nothing authentic known of its history. Tradition relates that the monks liked good living better than fasting; and that the devotional exercises they most delighted in were those they pursued along with the nuns of the convent at Ockham, on the other side of the river. If we may believe the same redoubtable tale-bearer, the monks, in order to facilitate their intercourse with the convent, determined to form a tunnel under the Wey, and thus connect the two establishments. Long and zealously did they labour, and at length they had so nearly completed their work, that all the brotherhood were summoned to be present at the opening of the farther end; when, just as they were under the centre of the river, the water burst in, and they were all drowned. The same story, however, is told of several other priories, and we may hope that it does not properly belong to our Black Canons. This, like the other religious establishments, was broken up at the dissolution by Henry VIII. This monarch granted the site of Newark Priory, with most of the adjoining property, to Sir Anthony Browne. It was undoubtedly a fine structure, and is of the early pointed style of architecture. It is in a very dila-

pidated condition, nearly every trace of ornament being gone. The walls are about three feet thick, and are formed, like most similar edifices in this county and in Sussex, of flint and rubble. The part that remains was no doubt the original priory church; some scattered fragments are supposed to have belonged to the refectory. It is now carefully preserved, but large parts of it are said to have been formerly used for repairing the road, and for any other purposes to which the old flint-work could be applied. These remains, with most of the estates originally granted to Sir Anthony Browne, now belong to Lord Lovelace. Ockham, which we mentioned above, is on the other side of the river. In the church-yard is a punning epitaph on one Spong, a carpenter, who "lived by railing, though he had no wit." As it has been often spoken of, we give the commencement; the remainder is rather dull:

"Though many a sturdy oak he laid along,
Fell'd by Death's surer hatchet here lies Spong:
Posts he oft made, yet ne'er a place could get,
And lived by *railing*, though he had no wit:
Old saws he had, although no antiquarian,
And *stiles* corrected, yet was no grammarian."

The fine mansion at Ockham is the residence of Lord Lovelace, whose Lady is Lord Byron's daughter Ada.

Passing by Wisley, where the Mole and Wey approach within a mile of each other, though they diverge again almost directly, we next reach Byfleet, noted as the residence of Spencer, the author of 'Anecdotes of Pope,' a dull book, and of 'Polymetis,' one that, despite the prodigious prosings of Polymetis, and the everlasting simper of Mysagetes, is rather more amusing, though per-

[Newark Priory.]

haps hardly meant to be so; he also wrote an 'Essay on Pope's Translation of the Odyssey.' Johnson says of him, in his clever, rough way, "He was a man whose learning was not very great, and whose mind was not very powerful:" a judgment which nobody can deny.

The next place to Byfleet is Weybridge, a large village, without any remarkable feature. Near it is Ham House, an old mansion, with some fine cedars in the grounds. It was given by James II. to Catherine Sedley, the daughter of Sir Charles Sedley. She afterwards married the Earl of Portmore, whose descendant is still the proprietor of Ham House. The river runs along Oatlands, the seat of Lord Francis Egerton. It formerly belonged to the Duke of York, for whom it was purchased from the Duke of Newcastle. The present building is recent, but the site on which it was erected was formerly occupied by a royal mansion. While it was a royal domain Elizabeth often visited it, and sometimes resided in it. Charles I. settled it on his queen Henrietta. The grounds contain a grotto, said to the finest in England; it was raised at a great expense by the Duke of Newcastle. In the house there is a good collection of pictures.

The river enters the Thames not far from Walton bridge, and nearly opposite the Coway stakes, where Cæsar is supposed to have crossed the Thames in his second expedition. None of the stakes, we believe, remain now. At Weybridge there is a railway station, from which we may be whirled back to London almost as quickly as if we possessed Fortunatus's cap.

THE LEA.

SCARCELY another river of the like extent and size could be found to yield to the bookish perambulator so abundant a harvest of associations as the Lea. Few could surpass it in the objects and places of interest that are to be found in proximity to its banks; and if it affords not many very striking features of landscape scenery, it presents several of extreme loveliness: such as made one, who has described many of them with a delightful zest, think "as he sat on a primrose bank and looked down the meadows — that they were too pleasant to look on but only on holidays," and then "turn his pre-

sent thoughts into verse;" in a wish, he adds, "I'll repeat to you:—

> "I in these flowery meads would be,
> These crystal streams should solace me," &c.

As we ramble along the banks of the Lea we shall be able just to glance at the more noticeable places as we successively reach them: some few we shall speak of at length, but the most part we shall content ourselves with merely pointing out.

The river Lea rises at Houghton Regis, about a mile and a half north-east of Dunstable, in Bedfordshire, and entering Hertfordshire near Hide Mill, proceeds in a south-easterly direction through Whethamsted and Hatfield Park, soon after leaving which it inclines to the north-east, and passes by Hertford and Ware, whence it bends again to the south, and is joined by the Stort near Hoddesdon; from which place it divides the counties of Hertfordshire and Essex, till it leaves the former at Waltham Abbey; it then separates Essex from Middlesex, continuing to flow nearly south, till it enters the Thames at Blackwall, opposite Greenwich marshes. By means of cuttings it has been rendered navigable for barges as far as Hertford; but it was a much larger river than it now is, before Alfred diverted its waters in order to lay the Danish fleet aground.

The source of the Lea cannot be readily reached from a railway. The nearest station is at Leighton, on the Birmingham line, from whence it is about eight miles across a fine country. Perhaps a still pleasanter way, though somewhat longer, is to leave the railway at Tring, and, mounting the hills above Aldbury, to go across Ashridge Park (a place worth

looking at), and by Little Gaddesden and Dagnal, to Dunstable. Over these hills the pedestrian will be accompanied by the music of thousands of larks, and in return for their melody, he may, if he please, when he reaches Dunstable, regale his palate with a dish of them. A lark, as cooked at the principal inns in that town, is said to form a most delicious morsel. But we only speak by report, for although it is a main principle with us in travelling to taste whatever the place we are in is famous for—so that we reckon it a misfortune that, led astray by the advice of a dietist, we did not touch brawn when at Canterbury, and we can remember no similar omission—and though we should have little sympathy for even a tee-totaller who should abstain from a mouthful of "Glenlivat o' the sma' still," in rambling over the Highlands, or in crossing the moors —we confess we could not bring ourselves to order a dish of the little aërial warblers, whose harmony we had just been listening to with so greedy an ear. The visitor should not pass through Dunstable without looking at its really magnificent church—only a portion, however, of the ancient conventual church—with its rich Norman doorway and windows—whose elaborate carvings are unfortunately much defaced, though still retaining much beauty; and he should, if he can, obtain a sight of the fine font in the interior.

From Dunstable, a walk of little more than a mile across the fields brings us to Houghton Regis, where, as we have said, the Lea rises. There is nothing remarkable in its source; the water, as at the source of many rivers, spreads out into a sort of pond, and there is little in it, or in the scenery about it, to claim attention. The village of Hough-

ton Regis is one that may deserve some regard; the scenery is of a cheerful rural character in itself, and scattered about it are many clusters of picturesque cottages, with goodly thatched roofs covered with deep-coloured mosses, and enlivened with many a noisy group of rosy children about their doors. The church too is a fine old building—somewhat *improved* by modern taste—but a fine building still; and in it is an ancient monument, with the effigies of a knight in armour, under a rich Gothic arch, which will well repay the attention of the antiquary. On the arch is a coat of arms, "a chevron between three butterflies," which, according to Lysons, are those of the Sewells, an ancient family who possessed the manor of Sewell, mentioned in Domesday-book. Houghton Regis, as its name implies, was anciently a part of the royal demesne: it now belongs to the Duke of Bedford, by one of whose ancestors it was purchased, with the manor of Sewell, in 1750. We have given, in our initial letter, a sketch of the Lea near its source; the church of Houghton Regis is in the background.

It would be idle to follow our stream yet awhile step by step. For some distance from its source it is only a sort of ditch, and skirts ploughed fields; and though it flows past a village or two, we do not remember anything worth noticing till it reaches Luton. Before it arrives at Luton it has, however, swelled into a brook of fair size, and sometimes lays the neighbouring marshes under water—indeed throughout its course its banks are for the most part marshy and liable to be flooded. Luton lies low, and has at times suffered severely from inundations. Its name is derived from the river, which

was "in British *Luh*." (Morant.) It is a neat, clean town, and from the number of straw-hat and other factories, has much of that business-like air the city-dweller so much misses in most second-rate country towns in agricultural districts. Dr. Waagen was much struck with its appearance: — "The little town of Luton," he says, "is very pleasantly situated in a rather hilly country. What a difference between that and places of a like extent in Germany! In the principal streets there is a good flag pavement, such as but few of the largest towns of Germany can boast." Luton has few buildings of interest: the church is almost the only one. This is of large size and unusual beauty. It is of Gothic architecture, but of various periods; the chancel was built by John Whethamsted, abbot of St. Albans, in the fifteenth century, and is deserving inspection. There is an air of grandeur about the whole building; but it is to be regretted that its venerable character has been greatly injured by modern barbarians—worse than Goths—who have covered the whole body of the church with a thick coating of lime-wash. The tower, which is built of stone and flints in alternate squares, is the only part that has escaped the tasteless infliction; and its time-worn aspect appears to frown more darkly upon the sickly hue of its appendages. Unfortunately the evil is not confined to a distant survey; the details of the architecture are almost hidden by the vile wash: and what is perhaps most provoking is, that it has only been perpetrated within a few years, when we might have expected that a better feeling would have prevailed.* The interior of the

* We lately visited an old church in Hertfordshire, where a similar enrichment has been effected in the interior, and

[Luton Church.]

church contains several interesting monuments. At the west end of the nave is an elegant Gothic baptistery of an octagonal form, which is described more at length and figured in Lysons's 'Magna Britannia: Bedfordshire,' p. 31. On the south side of the chancel are four richly-carved stone seats. Other objects of interest, which we have not time now to notice, will repay examination.

The making of straw-plait is quite a feature in the villages as well as in the towns round about this neighbourhood. In fine weather, as the women and girls sit or stand about the cottage-doors, plaiting the straw in the sunshine, by the porches gay with bright flowers, they present groups such as painters might delight to seize and embody. We wonder that they have not oftener been transferred to canvas: portrayed in true and characteristic form and colour, they would, we think, yield hardly, if at all, in rustic grace and piquancy to the often-painted distaff spinners.

After passing by Luton the Lea flows through Luton Park, which is extensive and well wooded. The park was laid out by Brown, who appears in this case to have accomplished his task with much skill. In it are two large lakes, said to contain, the one fourteen, and the other forty acres, supplied by our river. Luton Hoo, as the house was called, was purchased by the celebrated Earl Bute in 1762, who immediately commenced en-

the names of those who caused it to be "whitewasht and beautified" are, very properly, inscribed in large letters over the entrance to the chancel. Why is not a like memorial placed on the outside of Luton Church? The churchwardens should look to it—taste so refined should not be suffered to pass unhonoured and unknown.

larging and rebuilding it on a scale of extreme grandeur. He employed Robert Adam as his architect, who was at the same time engaged in the erection of Shelburne House, in London, for him; but the public clamour caused the latter to be given up, and the works at Luton to be suspended for a time; and when these were afterwards completed, it was on a less extensive plan. This fine mansion was unfortunately almost destroyed by fire on the 9th of November, 1843, only the right wing having been saved, and many of the pictures, of which there was a very large and excellent collection, with other valuable property, were burnt, or damaged by their hasty removal. The interior was of unusual splendour. Dr. Johnson visited Luton Hoo along with Boswell, and although there were some things he did not admire, "on the whole," says Boswell, "he was very much pleased; he said, 'This is one of the places I do not regret having come to see. It is a very stately place indeed; in the house magnificence is not sacrificed to convenience, nor convenience to magnificence. The library is very splendid, the dignity of the rooms is very great, and the quantity of the pictures is beyond expectation, beyond hope.'" This we think a piece of criticism eminently characteristic of the doctor. His admiration of the *quantity* of the pictures, "beyond expectation, beyond hope," is particularly good.* Nor is his remark about the pleasure-grounds inferior in its way; every one knows with what indifference he regarded natural scenery; and would easily guess how impatiently

* Dr. Johnson, in his 'Life of Milton,' speaks as if "to count pictures," as he there terms it, were the only object in looking at a collection of them.

he would listen to the accounts given him of these grounds: "but when it was proposed to walk in them," Boswell tells us he replied, "Don't let us fatigue ourselves. *Why should we walk there?* Here 's a tree, let us get to the top of it."

After it quits Luton Park the Lea runs close alongside the Whethamsted road till it reaches that place. The scenery is in many parts pretty, but very little varied, and the banks are low. Two or three water-mills are worked by it, but, like nearly all the mills on the Lea, they are not very attractive in their appearance. Whethamsted is a cheerful little town. The church is rather a curious structure, something in the form of a Maltese cross, with a tower and somewhat dumpy spire rising from the intersection of the nave and transept. It was at Whethamsted that the barons who confederated against Edward II. and his favourite Pierce Gaveston assembled their forces. From Whethamsted the scenery is more picturesque. The traveller may make his way along the meadows by the river side without much difficulty, yet it is hardly worth his while; the road, which is rather a pleasant one, leaves the river a little on the left, and following it for about two miles, we reach Brocket Hall and park, the seat of Lord Melbourne. Brocket Hall was erected about a century since by James Paine, who has given elevations and plans of it, and of the bridge he here built across the Lea, in his work entitled 'Views, Plans, &c.' The house is a brick edifice, of a somewhat striking appearance, and the Lea spreads out before it into a spacious lake. Altogether it is well fitted to afford a refreshing retreat from the care and strife of political contests

We notice nothing worth mentioning from the time the river leaves Brocket Park until it enters Hatfield Park, although the rambler will not regret pursuing its course. The meadows abound with flowers, and the river offers in its windings frequent pictures, a little Dutch in their character, but more beautiful than Dutch master, though he be Cuyp himself, ever painted.

The Lea runs through a corner of Hatfield Park, leaving Hatfield considerably on our right. There is nought in the town to call us out of the way. Hatfield Park is of vast extent, and though rather level, is considerably diversified in its aspect by the profusion of noble trees it contains. In it are said to be some of the finest oak, elm, and ash trees in the county. At a corner of one of the avenues on the northern side of the park is an old oak, called the "Queen's Oak," from a tradition that when Elizabeth was a prisoner here, it formed the boundary of her daily walks. It is much decayed, only one of its main branches remaining; but the decayed part has been carefully covered with a cement, and a railing has been placed around it to preserve it from curious visitors. Hatfield House is the property of the Marquis of Salisbury, and is of enormous size. One of its wings, it will be remembered, was destroyed by fire a few years back, when the dowager marchioness was burnt to death. The part then destroyed has been rebuilt, and we believe large alterations have been made in various parts of the mansion by the present marquis, who has an inclination for building. The place possesses much historical interest; Elizabeth, as we have said, was a prisoner here; after her accession to the throne she gave Hatfield House to Lord Burleigh, the

ancestor of the present Marquis of Salisbury. Charles I. was also for a short time confined in it. The interior of the mansion is said to be very splendid, and it contains a good many excellent pictures; but it is to be regretted that the public are strictly excluded from seeing them, or from inspecting the building.

By this time the Lea has become a river of tolerable size, and from Hatfield Park to Hertford is much more beautiful than in the earlier part of its course; and it increases in beauty till it enters the latter town. The grounds on either side are hilly and well wooded, and handsome houses, rustic cottages, with ever and anon a distant spire peeping from among the trees, relieve the way from everything like monotony.

A short distance before we reach Hertford the Lea is joined by the river Maran, a lovely little stream, which has its source a few miles from King's Walden. About two miles before its union with the Lea it passes through Panshanger Park, whither we will retrace it. Panshanger is not near so large as Hatfield Park, but from the greater variety of surface much more beautiful. Indeed there is so much that is attractive about it, and altogether it is so delightful a spot for a day's visit from London, that we shall extend our notice of it a little beyond our usual limit.

Panshanger belongs to the Earl Cowper, who, with a liberality deserving grateful notice, permits the most free access not only to his park and grounds, but to his picture gallery, and both contain more than enough to repay a pilgrimage. Before we enter the gallery let us saunter awhile along these slopes, and among these groups of lofty

and picturesque trees, and then beside the flowery banks of that clear, bright, and rapid little stream, and watch its silvery tenants poising themselves against the current, or darting briskly after some luckless insect. A brief converse with the works of nature will form no unfit preparation of the mind for an enjoyment of those works of man we are about to examine. There is a rich and varied succession of views all over the park, but the main attraction is the famous oak. This is a most majestic tree, surpassed perhaps in size by many, but equalled in beauty by none. At least we never saw, nor remember to have heard of, any that can be compared with it. It stands alone in a 'bottom,' in the private garden, and its wide branches spread out unobstructedly in every direction. According to Arthur Young, in his 'Survey of Herts,' it was called the *Great Oak* in 1709. Strutt, in his 'Sylva Britannica,' fol. 1822, says it contains one thousand feet of timber, and is nineteen feet in circumference at a yard from the ground. The trunk rises from its roots with a graceful curve, and the main branches separate from it in a regular yet varied and free manner, such as to render it quite a model of form as an oak. Its remarkable symmetry causes it, as is the case in a fine statue, or well-proportioned architectural edifice, to appear smaller than it really is. All who see it express surprise at its largeness when they stand beside its trunk. When clothed in the full luxuriance of its foliage nothing in the shape of a tree can surpass the harmonious grandeur of its appearance. Even when denuded of its leaves it is a noble object; in some respects more noble than before. We give an engraving of it in this state; it is represented in

full leaf by Strutt, in the work before referred to, and by Loudon, in his 'Arboretum;' but in neither instance has there been anything like justice done to it. Indeed Loudon's engraving is merely a reduced copy of that in Strutt.

[Panshanger Oak.]

The gardens are tastefully laid out; there are too some pleasant terraces, and some of those walks (or alleys) bounded by tall evergreens, such as we read of in old books and see in the paintings of Watteau and Lancret. We need not stay to notice the external appearance of the house. It is one of

those heterogeneous jumbles well named 'Modern Gothic.' The interior is designed with much more judgment. But we must turn to the Picture Gallery, as there are works there that will need all the time we can devote to them:—the productions of Raphael and Bartolomeo are not to be understood at a hasty glance. The Gallery is a noble room, well lighted by two or three lanterns, and also by a large bay-window that looks over a richly cultivated scene. The walls are hung with a bright scarlet cloth, which, with the gilt cornices and other ornaments, and the rich furniture of the room, has a brilliant effect—too brilliant indeed for the sober character of the pictures, which would better accord with a more sombre tone of colour in the fittings. The ante-room through which we pass into the Gallery is chiefly hung with family portraits; among others is that of the celebrated Chancellor Cowper, who looks as if the cares of the state sat lightly on him.

Immediately opposite to us, as we enter the Gallery, is the gem of the collection—'The Holy Family,' by Fra Bartolomeo. The figures are seated under the shade of a palm-tree, and are well drawn and skilfully arranged. Dr. Waagen, in his 'Works of Art and Artists in England,' says, "It is the most beautiful picture that I am acquainted with by this friend of Raphael. . . . The colouring is of extraordinary depth and warmth, even for the Friar." Whatever may be thought of the Doctor's judgment as regards the higher requisites of art, few will dispute his thorough knowledge of all that concerns the conventional excellencies of a picture: he is essentially a 'gallery-bred judge,' as he has been termed by that

strange writer, the author of 'Modern Painters,' and we may safely trust his opinion, that this is one of the very finest of the Friar's pictures. But, after all, its main excellence arises from the earnest devotional feeling that so eminently characterizes it. There is no striving after strong contrasts or glaring effects. The colouring is of a rich though subdued brilliancy: but it is not in any degree, as we sometimes see even in the colouring of Correggio, destructive of the religious seriousness of the work. It is a work of lofty character, but must, perhaps, be turned to again and again before its full grandeur is appreciated.

The next grand attraction of the place—to us we confess it is the chief—is a 'Madonna and Child,' by Raphael, which hangs just by the Bartolomeo. It is not a very large picture; the child is not an entirely agreeable one, but the mother is one of the most exquisite realizations of female purity and delicacy we ever saw. Her head is bent forward, and there is a slightly pensive look in her eyes, which are regarding with an intense earnestness the child on her lap; and yet there is a vacancy in them, as if they see not what they are fixed upon. Her thoughts are upon the child, but she is thinking also of His wondrous birth and of all those portentous predictions she has heard concerning Him. Though the present dwells in her mind, the past and the future—indistinct and unrecognised it may be—are mingling in it too. Raphael may not have thought thus when his hand traced that form—it may not have been in his mind when it conceived that image—yet he must be dull indeed who cannot discover this, or more, as it is there palpably embodied. Even Raphael

never surpassed the almost ideal perfection of all that is pure and lovely in expression in this face. Yet it does not 'strike' at a glance. It requires a repeated examination to enter into the full extent of its meaning: and we have heard no mean judges speak of it disparagingly. To see how far Raphael surpassed every other painter in imparting to his female faces a holy elevation of character and at the same time preserving all their loveliness, we need but cross the room to a 'Head of the Virgin,' by Correggio, which hangs nearly opposite, and which it is said Sir Joshua Reynolds lingered over for hours when he first saw it, and returned to repeatedly before he would quite leave it. Admirable as this picture is as regards colour, &c., there is a want of dignity, and also of delicacy, that is very apparent after quitting the other. Another 'Madonna and Child,' by Raphael, is in the room, and a very beautiful one it is, but certainly far inferior to that of which we have just spoken. It is in his early manner, and was evidently painted soon after he quitted the studio of Perugino. That we first noticed bears the date of 1508.

The name of Michael Angelo is attached to a 'Dead Christ,' but without the slightest hesitation we pronounce it not to be his. About the rudest even of his drawings there are a breadth of conception and power of hand, which are entirely wanting in this very ordinary production.

Much as we should like to notice the various pictures in detail, our space entirely forbids our attempting to do more than name two or three of the more famous without dwelling on them. The collection is unusually rich in the works of Andrea del Sarto; among others is an admirable portrait

of himself; he is dressed in a full and graceful robe, and is looking steadily at the spectator, from behind a table at which he appears to have been writing. It is a manly unaffected portrait, and capitally painted. There are some other portraits, and three unintelligible pictures connected with the history of Joseph by the same hand. By Guido there is a 'Sibyl' painted in his freest and best manner. Salvator Rosa has a landscape, a view by the Sea-shore, of great brilliancy. It has suffered a little perhaps in cleaning, but it is a masterly work, and entirely destroys a landscape by Wilson that has been very injudiciously hung above it. There is a large 'Equestrian Portrait,' by Rembrandt, the only one, we believe, he ever painted. Some fault might be found with the drawing, but the chiaroscuro is as broad and effective as it almost always is in his pictures. There is also a portrait of 'Quesnoi,' the sculptor, called 'Il Fiamingo,' by Nicholas Poussin, which displays refined feeling, and is the more interesting from the fact of Poussin having painted so few portraits. Besides these there are other pictures by A. Carracci, Vandyke, Velasquez, Cuyp, &c. Altogether, as we said above, the collection is a most choice one, and the ready liberality with which access is granted to it greatly heightens the enjoyment felt in its contemplation.

As we have suggested a visit to Panshanger as one of the most agreeable day's excursions from London, we will just point out how it may be easiest accomplished. By the North-Eastern Railway the visitor can at once reach Hertford, from whence a pretty walk of little more than two miles will bring him to Panshanger. The way is by the

north road for about a mile beyond Hertford, and then along a very rural road on the left of the main one, till the lodge is reached. Dr. Waagen says, that "being a great walker," he managed to reach it on foot from Hertford by the aid of a guide; but the most feminine of our readers need not fear being tired by the length of the way, or be deterred by its difficulty. As we have hinted, the collection is not of a kind to be hastily examined, and the visitor is allowed to remain as long as he pleases in the room, especially if the family is absent. Still by a little management and leaving London by the half-past nine o'clock train, time enough will be afforded for a stroll through the park, which should not be omitted; and there are many walks beyond its limits of remarkable beauty, particularly up some of the lanes to the west of it. The stranger should not, however, wander too far; Hertfordshire ways are very crooked and Hertfordshire directions crookeder, and he might perchance find himself too late for the last train.

Hertford is a busy, respectable town; it has a bustling appearance on a market-day, and still more at assize times. There is much of historical interest attached to the town, yet it has few historical relics. The castle, which is almost the only one, it has been said was erected by Alfred, but it is far more probable that it was built about 909 by Edward the Elder, who is also reported to have rebuilt and fortified the town, which had been destroyed by the Danes. Hertford is supposed to have been a principal residence of the East Saxon kings. When the Dauphin Louis contested the English throne with King John, Hertford castle was stoutly defended on behalf of

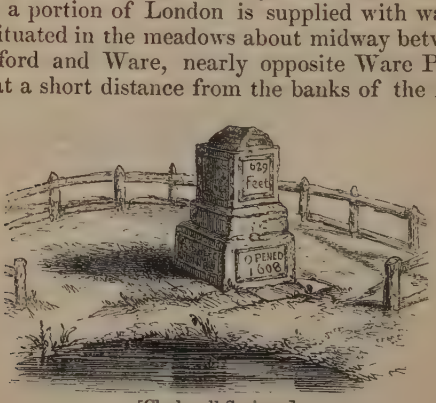
[Hertford Castle.]

the king by Godarvil, who however was at last forced to capitulate. Edward III., in 1345, gave the castle to John of Gaunt for his residence; and while he held it, John, king of France, and David, king of Scotland, were prisoners in it. At the time of the deposition of Richard II., Henry, the son of John of Gaunt, held his court in the castle. Several succeeding monarchs occasionally resided in it: among others Queen Elizabeth; and a small chamber is shown in the highest tower as the place of her captivity. There is, however, no evidence, beyond the tradition, to prove that she ever was confined in it: probably the tradition arose from the circumstance of her having dwelt there. There is little remaining of the ancient castle, the only portions being some of the outer walls, and two or three towers with a few chambers attached. These are of brick, and in tolerable preservation, though not in the original state, they having been repaired and fitted up as a residence. Our engraving of it is from a sketch taken from the Lea, which flows below it. In the grounds of the castle are a couple of Lombardy poplars of unusual size and beauty.

Hertford was, in 1647, the head-quarters of the Parliament army; and it was here that the mutiny of Lilburne's regiment occurred, which at first threatened to be fatal to the Parliament cause. Cromwell, however, by one of those prompt acts that were so natural to him, averted the danger. Directly the mutiny broke out he removed the army to Ware, and having, on addressing the troops, discovered that the disaffection was confined to one regiment, he at once surrounded it, and took measures to render its resistance unavail-

ing. He then called a council of war, and having seized the ringleaders, three were condemned to death, and from them one was chosen by lot and instantly shot at the head of his regiment, the others being retained in the hands of the marshal as security for the obedience of the remainder of the regiment.

The neighbourhood of Hertford yields an agreeable variety of pleasant walks. The banks of the Lea, between it and Ware, cannot however be greatly praised for their beauty: at any rate we need not linger beside them, as we shall soon reach some of a pleasanter and, from various reasons, more interesting character. We may, however, just notice that Chadswell Springs, which form the source of the New River, by means of which so large a portion of London is supplied with water, are situated in the meadows about midway between Hertford and Ware, nearly opposite Ware Park, and at a short distance from the banks of the Lea.



[Chadswell Springs.]

The site of the principal spring is marked by a stone, erected by the New River Company, which

informs us that it was opened in 1608, and that the water is conveyed forty miles. From the spring the water flows into a circular basin, surrounded by a light wooden railing, and thence into a channel, which, having been swelled by some cuts from the Lea, runs for several miles parallel to that river.

Ware is an ancient town, being mentioned in Domesday-book, and has all the old-fashionedness that might be expected from its antiquity; yet there is nothing of consequence to notice in it. The houses are none very remarkable, nor are there any remarkable remains: indeed what chiefly attracts the attention of a stranger is the number of malthouses it contains, and they are not very ornamental. On the banks of the Lea, a short distance from the church, are some portions of a priory that belonged to a body of Benedictines, who were subordinate to the Abbey of St. Ebrulf, at Utica in Normandy. There is a large bed, twelve feet square, at one of the inns, but it is not the veritable "great bed at Ware" that Shakspere mentions. That, however, we believe was in existence not many years back; it is referred to in all the histories of Hertfordshire, and in old Chauncey's the reader may see "a merrie tale" connected with it—a specimen—not a very delicate one—of the practical jokes of our ancestors. The Danes, under Hasting, sailed up the Lea to Ware, at which place, or at Hertford as some assert, they formed a camp. Alfred erected two strong forts immediately below their station, and by draining the channel of the Lea, got possession of their fleet, and compelled them to retreat into Gloucestershire. Chauncey relates that "in the 25th of Henry III.,

on the 27th of June, Gilbert Marshall, Earl of Pembroke, a potent peer of the realm, proclaimed here a disport of running on horseback with lances, which was then called a tournament." At this tournament Gilbert himself was killed by a fall from his horse; Robert de Say, one of his knights, was slain, and several others were wounded.

Following our stream we soon reach Amwell, whose hill, rising on our right and crowned with the old church, has an exceedingly picturesque appearance. Amwell has been noticed by Walton, and celebrated in pleasant verse by John Scott:—

> "The pleased eye, which o'er the prospect wide
> Has wander'd round, and various objects mark'd,
> On Amwell rests at last, its favourite scene.
> How picturesque the view! where up the side
> Of that steep bank her roofs of russet thatch
> Rise mix'd with trees, above whose swelling tops
> Ascends the tall church tower, and loftier still
> The hill's extended ridge."

Scott of Amwell, as he was called, like many another poet of celebrity in his own day, is slipping out of memory now: a few words about him will not therefore be out of place in connexion with the spot so closely associated with his name. John Scott was born in Bermondsey, in January, 1730, and succeeded early in life to some property in Amwell, where he fixed his dwelling, and, excepting some portion of each year spent at a house he had in London, continued to reside there till his death, which occurred in December, 1783, at his London residence. His parents were members of the Society of Friends, in which communion he remained during his life; forming therefore one of the very small fraternity of Quaker poets. Dr. Johnson, who esteemed him highly, undertook to

write his life, but his own death prevented the accomplishment of his purpose. It was afterwards written by Hoole, the translator of Tasso; but it is utterly devoid of interest, for his life ran "smooth as his verse:" like Goldsmith's Vicar, all his adventures were by the fire-side, and all his migrations from the blue bed to the brown, or, in Quaker speech, from his country house to that in the city. He was possessed of a fine intellect, though wanting that something which constitutes genius in the man, and can alone impart vitality to his verse. By his contemporaries he was thought highly of, and will be read with pleasure now by those who meet with his works and can listen to the melody of the oaten pipe. One at least of his smaller poems will retain a place in the collections:

> "I hate that drum's discordant sound
> Parading round, and round, and round.
> * * * * *
> To me it talks of ravaged plains,
> And burning towns, and ruin'd swains,
> And mangled limbs, and dying groans,
> And widows' tears, and orphans' moans," &c.

His poetry is nearly all of the "pastoral" kind, and has the smoothness and neatness, the facile flow, and something of the "refined rusticity" that ought to characterize productions of that class. But there is an absence of human character and interest that soon renders the sweetest pastoral poetry wearisome. Hoole objects to the introduction of so many of the words and phrases in common use; instead of being in the received Idyllic mode, it is like real country life and scenery: his refined taste cannot endure its rusticity. That taste has now happily worn out; the poet was

wiser in that than his biographer. Scott's great defect is his want of strength and life, but there is a Quaker-like simplicity that is very agreeable, at least for a while. His conception of country life is very unlike that of Crabbe—indeed there is a deficiency of nerve in almost all he wrote that causes his placidity and sweetness to cloy. He wrote a great many occasional pieces; his principal work is named from the place that has caused this digression—Amwell. The view from Amwell-hill is a very fine one, and we gladly avail ourselves of Scott's description of it, which will serve as a sample of his descriptive style, and be more pleasing, we are sure, to our readers than any account we could give of the prospect:—

"How beautiful,
How various is yon view! Delicious hills
Bounding smooth vales, smooth vales by winding streams
Divided, that here glide thro' grassy banks
In open sun, there wander under shade
Of aspen tall, or ancient elm, whose boughs
O'erhang grey castles, and romantic farms,
And humble cots of happy shepherd swains.
* * * * * *
Far towards the west, close under shelt'ring hills,
In verdant meads by Lea's cerulean stream,
Hertford's grey towers ascend; the rude remains
Of high antiquity, from waste escap'd
Of envious time and violence of war."

The church is a pretty building, and altogether the place would be very pleasing even without its associations. It is mentioned in Domesday-book under the name of Emme-well, and has been thought to derive its name from a well at the foot of the hill called Emma's-well, which now forms a part of the New River. At Amwell the New River is a little better looking than elsewhere; its banks

are planted with some fine willows, and a little islet adorns the stream. On the isle is a stone with an inscription, referring to the well, by Scott, and the island is mentioned by him in his poem of Amwell:—

> "Slow beneath that bank the silver stream
> Glides by the flowery isle, and willow groves
> Wave on its northern verge, with trembling tufts
> Of osier intermixed."

"On the hill above the church are traces of a very extensive fortification [Qy. that above referred to], the rampart of which is very distinguishable on the side overlooking the vale through which the river Lea flows. In this parish also, on the side towards Hertford, is *Barrow field*, wherein is a large tumulus; and not far distant are remains of an ancient road, probably of Roman origin."* These the visitor will discover readily enough, and altogether he may spend an hour or two at Amwell very agreeably.

The scene of Izaak Walton's inimitable book is laid along the banks of the Lea between Tottenham and Ware: that is, along that portion of our river we are now to ramble beside. We have more than once quoted from the 'Complete Angler,' and we cannot refrain from availing ourselves of so fair an opportunity of venturing a few remarks on it and its author. According to Drayton,

> "The old Lee brags of the Danish blood,"

but it brags more loudly now of the name of Izaak Walton, to whom indeed it chiefly owes the celebrity of its own name.

Izaak Walton is a remarkable instance of what

* Brayley.

may be effected when out of the fulness of the heart the mouth speaks:—from taking up the pen not merely to fill a few sheets, but because there is somewhat to communicate. We meet with nothing profound in his reasoning—a light plummet will sound its lowest depths; nothing in his general remarks that had not been said before and that has not been said a hundred times since; and of course there is little in the main subject of his book that is generally interesting; yet there is not a man with the least pretension to literary taste but reads the 'Complete Angler' with genuine enjoyment. It is probably the only volume professing to be a mere guide to any particular pastime that, after nearly two centuries, has retained a spark of vitality:—yet, although that time has passed away since the first edition was published, it is now read with as much freshness and pleasure as when it first appeared.* Undoubtedly it is not what concerns angling that renders the work so attractive, yet whoever makes the acquaintance of Izaak Walton will assuredly, like *Anceps*, "part with him full of good thoughts, not only of himself, but of his recreation." Not that Izaak would have been pleased to think that any reader would pass lightly over what he wrote on his favourite art, or think meanly of it; he will not bate one jot of the dignity of angling: "for angling," he tells us, "is somewhat like poetry—a man must be born to it;" while the felicities of its practice he rates equally high:—"no life so happy and so pleasant as the life of a well governed angler; for when the lawyer is swallowed up with business, and the

* The first edition of the 'Complete Angler' was published in 12mo., in 1653.

statesman is preventing or contriving plots, then we sit on cowslip banks, hear the birds sing, and possess ourselves in as much quietness as these silent silver streams which we now see glide so quietly by us. Indeed, my good scholar, we may say of Angling as Dr. Boteler said of strawberries—'Doubtless God could have made a better berry, but doubtless God never did:' and so, if I might be judge, God did never make a more calm, quiet, innocent recreation than angling."

Walton's argument in favour of angling is most singularly managed; and the variety of topics and illustrations brought in to support it are not the least singular portion. Nothing that can be introduced is omitted. Everybody who can in any way be made to uphold or do honour to angling is constrained to appear, from Deucalion and Belus to Sir Henry Wotton; and from Seth and Moses to Nat. Roe: and every river, from "that in Arabia of which all the sheep that drink thereof have all their wool turned into a vermilion colour," to that "in Judea that runs swiftly all the six days of the week and stands still on the Sabbath:" while of fish we have all that is wonderful recorded, from "the Balæna or Whirlpool that is so long and broad as to take up more in length and breadth than two acres of ground," to "the fish called a Hermit, that at a certain age gets into a dead fish's shell, and like a hermit dwells there alone, studying the wind and the weather, and so turns her shell that she makes it defend her from the injuries that they would bring upon her." And much more of the like kind have we told us, sometimes in evident good faith, sometimes with a quiet half incredulous smile, hardly less charming.

What renders Walton's 'Angler' so delightful a book is the happy spirit in which everything is communicated. There is a lively freedom and point about every part—a directness and earnestness in the arguments, a quaint grace and facility in the descriptions of scenery, a simplicity and kindness in his notices of his companions, and a still humour intermingling everywhere with a cheerful seriousness, such as are hardly to be met with so happily blended in any other work. It is the perfect counterpart of the agreeable gossip of an intelligent, frank, and light-hearted old man. And it adds not a little to the pleasure of reading it to know that it is just what it seems to be. Just the every-day chit-chat of an old man who loved his angle and his book, and a little innocent pleasantry with a fitting companion. Walton wrote the 'Complete Angler' when he was near sixty, and there is all the freshness of a new taste about it. One might imagine it written when his mind was buoyant from its escape from "the shop near Chancery-lane," and under the exhilarating influence of those feelings that result from an unrestrained intercourse with nature after a long absence from her. His descriptions are quite in the spirit of one

> "who, long in populous cities pent,
> Where houses thick and sewers annoy the air,
> Forth issuing on a summer's morn to breathe
> Among the pleasant villages and farms
> Adjoin'd, from each thing met conceives delight:"

and the gentle enthusiasm with which he dwells on such spots as are within the reach of every one who is minded to taste of "free nature's grace" is quite infectious. He speaks with as much minuteness of the sedgy bank of a quiet stream as Cowper,

and with far more zest. He had the eye and the mind of a poet, and if he had written poetry in early life, perhaps he would have equalled in delicacy of touch and exquisite sweetness of diction the best verses of "holy Mr. Herbert," whose poetry delighted him so much, and whose character had so many points of similarity as well as of dissimilarity with his own. But we ought not to regret that he did not direct his attention more to poetry, seeing that he has left us an unequalled example of artless colloquial prose. Here his style is quite his own. Familiar with the writings of his contemporaries—who were among the best writers of prose England ever possessed—he imitated none, but formed for himself a style free, facile, and pliable, accommodating itself without difficulty to every turn of his thought—now running lightly along in unlaboured prattle, and in a moment striking into a fuller and deeper note. Easy and unlaboured as his style appears, it was not easily acquired; nor did he allow himself to be readily satisfied with it; but, to use Milton's phrase, "took time enough to pencil it over with all the various touches of art." He lived to see five editions of the 'Angler' published, and in every one after the first he altered and amended not merely the substance, but the phraseology. Sometimes he merely changed a word or recast a sentence; at others he omitted sentences altogether or supplied their places by others of more pleasing structure—and few of our prose writers have had a finer ear for the harmony of a period. In Sir Harris Nicholas's superb edition of the 'Complete Angler,' the alterations in the fifth edition are pointed out, and are worthy the examination of those who are curious in

such matters. Though the 'Angler' has been his most popular work, his 'Lives' have been admired by all who are capable of admiring good plain earnest writing, even when the sentiments may not always coincide with their own. Wordsworth has a fine sonnet on them, commencing—

> "There are no colours in the fairest sky
> So fair as these:"

and though few could assent to such praise, few will deny their exceeding beauty. We have not perhaps any other biographical sketches so beautiful in their way as these. They abound in depth of feeling as well as in lively and good-natured pleasantry. Who can read unmoved, for instance, the old man's touching conclusion to his life of Sanderson:—"It is now too late to wish that my life may be like his, for I am in the eighty-fifth year of my age: but I humbly beseech Almighty God that my death may; and do earnestly beg of every reader to say Amen." As a mere psychological study, the works of a man who began writing at sixty, and wrote his last work (a sketch of the character of John Chalkhil,* to whose poem

* Singer, in his reprint of 'Thealma and Clearchus,' maintains that Chalkhil is a mere pseudonym, and that the poem is Walton's own. This opinion is adopted in Major's edition of the 'Complete Angler,' and enforced at some length in an article on Chalkhil in the 'Retrospective Review,' vol. iv.; but Archdeacon Nares in the 'Gentleman's Magazine,' and Sir H. Nicholas in his 'Notes to Walton,' have sufficiently established the reality of Chalkhil's existence, and shown that Walton, by having married into his family, might easily have obtained the MS. To us, the internal evidence alone is sufficient to determine that Thealma was not written by Walton; and in so saying, we have not forgotten the reviewer's supposition, that it might have been a juvenile production.

of 'Thealma and Clearchus' it was prefixed) at ninety, would be worth reading.

We have dwelt longer on Izaak Walton than we intended, but in treating of his own Lea we could not pass him by with a cursory notice. We shall now quit him, giving just one sample of his conversation as he sat under a honeysuckle hedge along with his scholar, and talked to him of the pleasures he had there partaken of.

"Look, under that broad beech-tree, I sat down when I was last this way a-fishing, and the birds in the adjoining grove seemed to have a friendly contention with an echo, whose dead voice seemed to live in a hollow tree, near to the brow of that primrose hill: there I sat viewing the silver streams glide silently towards their centre, the tempestuous sea; yet sometimes opposed by rugged roots and pebble-stones, which broke their waves and turned them into foam: and sometimes I beguiled time by viewing the harmless lambs, some leaping securely in the cool shade, whilst others sported themselves in the cheerful sun; and saw others craving comfort from the swollen udders of their bleating dams. As I thus sat, these and other sights had so fully possessed my soul with content, that I thought, as the poet has happily expressed it—

> 'I was for that time lifted above earth,
> And possess'd joys not promised in my birth.'"

The rambler who wishes to obtain some notion of the Lea as it was in the days of honest Izaak, should follow the old course of the river throughout. The new cuts made for the convenience of traffic are as straight and stiff as those of a Dutch canal; while the old river, neglected by all but the angler, is as pliant and various in outline as any

other of Nature's own works. A prettier river of its kind it would not be easy to name than is the Lea for the next few miles of its course. Its banks are suffered to yield to the influence of the stream, and are as unconstrained as its waves. Here decked with a profusion of primroses and cowslips, or the graceful wind-flower—there sloping gently down, with only a few 'wee pink-tipped daisies' to relieve the bright green sweep—presently covered with a tangled heap of brambles and other lowly shrubs, (or as a great authority in the picturesque might say,*—"with thorns and briers and other ditch trumpery")—while in early spring the blackthorn, or, somewhat later, the wild rose bush with perhaps a honeysuckle clinging about it (a marriage of exquisite grace and sweetness)—shed beauty and fragrance around. The river too is brilliant with aquatic plants, which, from the flowering rush to the yellow water-lily, are in great luxuriance. Spring is peculiarly the time to enjoy the Lea. Walton makes his anglers ramble beside it on May-day, and he chose his time well: its placid character is in unison with the gentle season. The lack of foliage along its borders,—for there is seldom any other tree than an old pollard willow, or a few alders,—of some consequence as regards the picturesque, but of little value for shade, prevents a full enjoyment of it in summer, and renders it less attractive than more wooded streams in autumn; but it is just the place in which the angler or lover of nature may best enjoy

"Sweet spring, full of sweet days and roses."

We have gossipped so much along the first few

* Gilpin, 'Forest Scenery.'

miles, that we must hasten over the remainder of our journey. We need not turn aside to Hayleybury, where is the well-known College of the East India Company, in which Mackintosh and Malthus have dispensed of their learning and wisdom. Nor will we stop at St. Margaret's longer than to call attention to it as offering many choice bits of river scenery. In Stansted parish, at a short distance from the river on the Newmarket road, the rambler will see an old brick building rapidly going to decay: it is the Rye-house, the scene of the famous Rye-house plot, which led to the trial and execution of Lord William Russel and Algernon Sidney. The object of the plot was to waylay and assassinate Charles II. and his brother James on their return from Newmarket. The Rye-house was then in the occupation of Rumbold, one of the conspirators, and was fixed upon as their rendezvous, and as the most convenient place to intercept the king; but the scheme failed, owing to the royal party returning sooner than the anticipated period. The project was revealed by Keeling, one of the party concerned, who said that Lord Russel was acquainted with it, and pledged to aid in the assassination of the king. We need not go on with so well known a tale. As Hallam, in his 'Constitutional History of England,' observes, "there appears no cause for doubting the reality of what is called the Rye-house plot . . . . . while it is needless to add that the main plot for assassinating the King and the Duke of York had no immediate connexion with the schemes of Russel, Essex, and Sidney." Only a portion of the house remains, and that is rapidly crumbling away; but it will repay a close inspection. It is of brick, and about

the outside there is some rather superior carving though a good deal defaced. The principa chimney too is a very fine one. At one of the angles of the building is a turret, but the uppe part has fallen in. It has been for many year used as a workhouse for Stansted parish; at presen it is rented by the landlord of the New Rye-house a little public-house just by. The interior bear all the marks of the purpose to which it has bee applied. Not a vestige of ornament of any kin remains. The large old fire-places have mad way for the most miserable of modern ones. Ever part is covered with layers of whitewash, th accumulations of monthly applications repeate for years. The only thing of any kind in the in terior of the house that will attract a second loo is the winding brick staircase up the turret men tioned above, and that has somehow escaped th brush. We think it right to mention all this because the elaborate finish of the exterior ma lead the visitor to expect something in the in side very different to the poverty-stricken aspec it presents. The foundations of the house appea to be everywhere sapped, and the whole must soo fall.

Our river now passes a little to the east of Hod desdon, which, if we visit it, need not detain u long. Here was the "Thacht-house," wher Venator proposed to "drink his morning draught;" a cottage at the northern extremity o the town is pointed out as the original, but it doubtful if it be so. Mat. Prior in his ballad o 'Down Hall' mentions the Bull Inn as the plac where he stopped on his way to take possession o his residence of that name.

" Into an old inn did their equipage roll
At a town they call Hodsdon, the sign of the Bull,
Near a nymph with an urn that divides the highway,
And into a puddle throws mother of tea:"

he does not however praise the fare, and he says of the hostess,—

" She roasted red veal, and she powdered red beef:
Full well she knew how to cook up a fine dish,
For tough were her pullets and tender her fish.
Down, down, derry down."

But as the nymph with an urn is gone, and the inn is rebuilt, we may reasonably hope that a better purveyor now rules the roast. Hoddesdon presents not a single noticeable feature; it is one of the barrenest places of its size we know. At the London end of it, there is, indeed, a rather fine mansion (now undergoing renovation) of the Elizabethan period, called Champion-house, a seat of the Dymock family, whose chief is the *Champion* of our royal coronations.

At Stansted the Lea is joined by the Stort, which here loses its name. The river hereabouts is a very favourite resort of the London angler, and a moderate degree of skill usually suffices to ensure a few bites, though the Lea fisherman is apt to boast that it requires a cunning hand to obtain much success. It will be confessed that here a man may enjoy that union of contemplation and action which, according to our master, " does most properly belong to the most honest, ingenuous, quiet, and harmless art of angling;" while, should rain chance to threaten, he may, like Izaak and his scholar, " turn out of the way a little, towards yonder high honeysuckle hedge; and there sit and sing whilst the shower falls so gently upon

the teeming earth, and gives yet a sweeter smell to the lovely flowers that adorn these fragrant meadows."

But we must not linger. At Broxbourne, the next place we arrive at, there is a church that we will quit our river for a while to examine. It is of large size, and of much beauty. It belongs to the time of Henry II., and consists of a nave, chancel, and aisles; at the west end there is a tower with a plain spire and beacon turret; and a small chapel is attached to each angle of the church. That on the north side was built in the reign of Henry VIII. by Sir William Say, Knight, as appears by the inscription on the frieze surrounding the outside, and which is intersected with shields of arms. In the interior is an altar tomb of grey marble of elaborate workmanship; it is placed beneath the arch which separates it from the chancel, and is inscribed to the memory of the above Sir Wm. Say, who died in 1529, and to his "wyffs, Genevese and Elizabyth." There are several other monuments to the Say family; and many curious ones to other persons. A great number of brasses still remain, and several have been covered by the pews. Many of the monuments deserve regard as illustrative of the costumes of the period of the Tudors, as well as being curious in themselves; and altogether the church is of a more than commonly interesting character.

Broxbourne is a pretty place, and the Lea is carefully "preserved" throughout it. Want's Inn at Broxbourne is much frequented by London anglers, and there is goodly display in it of fish stuffed on account of their superior size. Here, as at Rye-house, the London citizen may enjoy the

[Broxbourne Church.]

luxury of "chops to follow," as well as in a city chop-house. At Wormley, a little farther on, is a neat little church, consisting of only a nave and chancel. It is an old building; on the north side there is a small Norman doorway, and in the interior are several curious and very ancient brasses.

Adjoining Wormley is Cheshunt, a long village of respectable, though not particularly attractive appearance. Cheshunt has been stated to be the Durolitum of Antoninus, and the fact of a number of Roman coins, &c. having been found here, strengthens the supposition. Others, however, who have paid attention to the subject, believe Durolitum to have been at Low Layton on the other side of the Lea, and six or seven miles nearer London; while in the Map of Ancient Britain published by the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge, it is placed near Romford in Essex, ten or twelve miles from either of these places; and Talbot has fixed on Brentwood as the site: at each Roman remains have been discovered. Wolsey once dwelt in Cheshunt; the manor of St. Andrew-le-Mote having been granted to him by Henry VIII., who gave it, after Wolsey's fall, to the Earl of Worcester, and afterwards to Thomas Denny; for Henry appears to have reclaimed his gifts with as much nonchalance as he presented them. It has since passed through many hands, and was recently the property of the late Sir J. Shaw, Chamberlain of the City of London. The house is a plain brick structure, but retains little of its original character, having been frequently altered and modernized. At Cheshunt was Theobald's, the residence of the celebrated Lord Burleigh; and here Queen Elizabeth often visited her

favourite minister. Not a fragment of the mansion now remains. The name alone is preserved by some houses erected on its site. Here, too, dwelt Richard Cromwell, after his return to England in 1680, in a house close by the church. He assumed the name of Clarke, and spent the remainder of his life in a round of conviviality. He was of an easy, good-natured, social turn, utterly without decision or even strength of character, and with a mind quite incapable of ambition. There are many anecdotes of his carousals while at Cheshunt, but none worth repeating. A greater statesman than Richard Cromwell—and, though not so famous, an honester than either Wolsey or Burleigh—Lord Somers, also resided at Cheshunt. And here, when excluded from any share in the government by the state of parties during the earlier years of the reign of Anne, he lived in retirement, spending his time in antiquarian and other literary pursuits, and in scientific investigation; he was, as Burnet tells us, very learned, and had formed a large collection of medals and valuable books and prints. It is pleasant to figure to oneself the noble-minded statesman thus enjoying his leisure—the true *otium cum dignitate*. On the Lea, at the northern end of Cheshunt, are some remains of a nunnery, which have been converted into a dwelling; they are not very remarkable in their appearance. Cheshunt also contains a college, established by the celebrated Countess of Huntingdon, for the training of young men for the ministry, principally in connexion with the sect named after her.

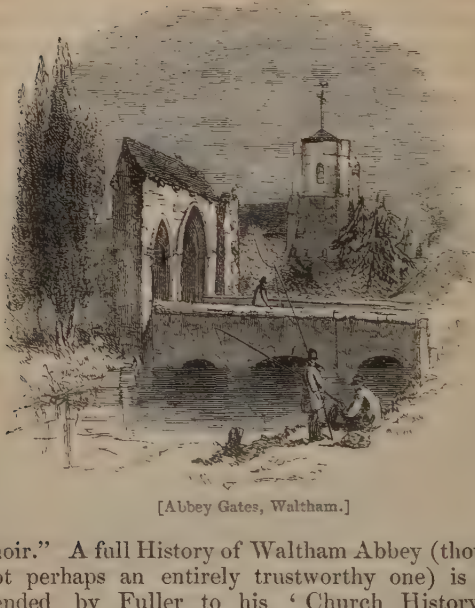
A little way past Cheshunt, on the road to London, is Waltham Cross, a small hamlet that takes its name from a cross of singularly fine

workmanship, erected by Edward I. to the memory of his consort Eleanor. It is of great beauty, and should not be passed by without regard. A few years back it was restored with much judgment and taste.

Near Waltham the Lea is divided into several streams, which are thought by many to be the channels that Alfred formed when he diverted the waters of the Lea, and thus left the Danish fleet aground in the meadows between Waltham and Ware. Spelman, however, in his 'Life of Ælfred the Great,' endeavours to show that the trenches that now branch from the river between Temple Mills and Old Ford, and join it again by Bromley, were those he cut for that purpose. Be that as it may, the Lea here separates into a number of small streams. Several of them run through Waltham Holy Cross, a large irregular town, about a mile and a half east of the Cross above spoken of. Waltham owes its name of Holy Cross to a cross with a figure of the Saviour upon it, said to have been discovered in a vision to a carpenter at Montacute, and brought here in an unknown manner. "Tovi, a man of great wealth and authority, *stalhere*, or standard-bearer, to King Cnute," built a church for the reception of this cross, and many marvellous cures were effected by its means. Edward the Confessor afterwards became possessed of Waltham, and built and endowed a monastery there. The abbey church was erected by Harold, whose body, after his death at the battle of Hastings, was brought here for interment. The abbey has undergone some strange changes, but this is not the place for tracing its history, which indeed would take up no little space to tell

at all properly. Of the abbey only a small portion now exists—that used as the present parish church, and a gateway by the Lea, of which we give a sketch. It stands a short distance from the Abbey Mills, and is built of stone, but repaired with bricks of a large size. The corbels on which the outer mouldings of the large arch rest, are formed by "demi-angels supporting shields, on which are the royal arms of Edward III.'s time, viz. France and England quarterly." These, however, are so much defaced as to be made out with difficulty. The Abbey buildings are said to have originally covered several acres.

It would take up too much of our time to attempt to describe the church, and there are so many descriptions of it extant that it is needless. There are few churches anywhere that will more amply repay examination, both as regards the interior and exterior. It is perhaps the earliest and most curious example of Anglo-Norman architecture now remaining in England. There are a great many windows, doorways, and arches that deserve attention, and inside are several massive columns curiously carved. There is too a remarkably fine crypt. The interior also contains several interesting monuments. As we mentioned above, the body of Harold was interred here, and a tomb with the inscription "*Hic jacet Harold Infelix*" long remained in memory of him. It was opened in the reign of Elizabeth, and the skeleton of a man found inside. Some notion of the original size of the church may be formed when we find it stated that "Harold's tomb was situated about forty yards from the present termination of the building, in the eastern part of the original



[Abbey Gates, Waltham.]

choir." A full History of Waltham Abbey (though not perhaps an entirely trustworthy one) is appended by Fuller to his 'Church History.'* Fuller was curate of Waltham, and repeats with much delight some of the merry tales he had collected about the monks of Waltham—who seem indeed to have been pretty much like the monks of

* Farmer also wrote a 'History of Waltham Abbey,' and the reader will find much additional information in Morant's 'Essex,' and in Brayley; we ought not in gallantry to omit the name of Mrs. Elizabeth Ogborne, who, in her 'History of Essex,' gossips famously about Waltham. Its architectural features are examined at considerable length in Britton's 'Architectural Antiquities.'

Melrose the ballad speaks of. Henry VIII. had a pleasure-house in the fields near Waltham, and there is an uncommon number of right pleasant stories told of him connected therewith, but we have so outrun our space we must not repeat any of them. Along the various branches of the Lea about Waltham are scattered extensive gunpowder-works belonging to the government; but it must be confessed they add very little to the beauty of the neighbourhood.

On our left the high grounds stretching to Epping Forest offer us some tempting walks: and many a pleasant stroll may be found over these hills and among the woods beyond. Epping Forest is not what it was—so many of the larger trees have been cut down as greatly to interfere with its character as a forest: yet there are not a few quiet secluded spots such as a Londoner would glory to meet with. But is not Epping Forest classic ground with every genuine cockney? Where is its Fairlop fair? Or shall its Easter hunt ever be forgotten? Alas! all that is earthly fades away. The fair is obsolescent; and of even the Epping hunt the glory is departing. In a few years Cruikshank's cuts and Hood's verses will alone remain to tell of the assembled host of cockney equestrians and city belles—of the daring feats of horsemanship, and the strange adventures of that day—"so renowned, so glorious."

On the other side of our river we soon reach Enfield Wash; and shortly after Edmonton, to whose churchyard we must turn aside, for here, "in a spot which, about a fortnight before his death, he had pointed out to his sister, on an afternoon wintry walk, as the place where he wished to

be buried," * lie the remains of Charles Lamb, the *Elia* who has thrown so many pleasant memories over so many every-day circumstances and objects. On a plain upright stone is the following inscription by his friend Dr. Carey, the translator of Dante:—

"To the Memory of Charles Lamb,
Died December 27, 1834, aged 59.

"Farewell, dear Friend! That smile, that harmless mirth,
No more shall gladden our domestic hearth;
That rising tear, with pain forbid to flow,
Better than words no more assuage our woe;
That hand, outstretched from small but well-earned store,
Yield succour to the destitute no more.
Yet art thou not all lost; through many an age,
With sterling sense and humour shall thy page
Win many an English bosom, pleas'd to see
That old and happier vein revived in thee.
This for our earth: and if with friends we share
Our joys in heaven, we hope to meet thee there." †

Charles Lamb lived for many years in this neighbourhood, first at Enfield, and then, till the close of his life, at Edmonton. His last days were not his happiest. He hated the country, and even Edmonton was not enough like London to satisfy him. He had spent his whole life laboriously, and though he had been for years longing for leisure, he found it a weariness when it came. His letters, written after he had retired from his office, are

* Talfourd.

† We heard a piece of criticism on this inscription that Lamb would have enjoyed. As we were copying it, a couple of canal excavators came across the churchyard, and read it over with great deliberation; when they had finished, one of them said, "A very fair bit of poetry that." "Yes," replied his companion, "I'm blest if it isn't as good a bit as any in the churchyard—rather too long though."

filled with complaints, in his half-mocking manner indeed, but evidently too real, of the misery of having too much time. He was a man of kindly affections, beloved to an uncommon degree by all who knew him; and in literature we shall in vain look for his successor in that rich, racy, quirkish, half-jesting, half-serious style, so peculiarly his own.

It was at Edmonton that John Gilpin and his wife should have dined. A painting of John Gilpin's ride is fixed outside a public-house in the town, and the house is commonly known as "Gilpin's Bell;" but we believe it is not the original Bell. It is not, however, without its associations. This is the house to which Charles Lamb used to accompany any of his friends who visited him on their return; and here he used to take a parting-cup, generally of porter, with them. All who have read Talfourd's 'Life of Lamb' will remember two or three pleasant anecdotes connected with the custom.

About a mile from Edmonton, by the side of the Lea, at a place called Cook's Ferry, stands Bleak Hall, the house to which Piscator took his scholar, and which was then "an honest alehouse where might be found a cleanly room, lavender in the windows, and twenty ballads stuck about the wall; with a hostess both cleanly, and handsome, and civil." The old house is nearly all gone; the building at the right of our engraving being the only portion left, and that, though by no means modern, hardly appears so old as Walton's time. The present public-house stands by the towing-path on a cut of the Lea; and the landlady of it told us that the old Bleak Hall was pulled down several

[Bleak Hall.]

years back, when they built the house they now inhabit. That portion of the old house left standing was a kitchen, with a room over it (ascended by a staircase outside), called the "fishermen's locker," from its having been used as a locker for their tackle. If not the place Izaak Walton refers to, it must long have been a like hostel for Lea fishermen. The evidence appears to tell against its identity, but tradition is strong in its favour.* The road past Bleak Hall leads up to Chingford, a village beautifully situated on the edge of Epping Forest, with one of the prettiest and most rural churches near London. It stands on an elevation, and from its form, and being covered with ivy, imparts quite a rusticity of character to the neighbourhood. There is a very fine view from the churchyard.

Returning to the Middlesex side of the Lea we speedily arrive at the long straggling hamlet of Tottenham, the western extremity of which is called Tottenham High Cross, from a structure that stands on the east side of the high road. According to Lysons ('Environs of London,' iii. 518), Tottenham High Cross is mentioned in

* It is generally called Bleak Hall, and is pointed out and engraved in Sir H. Nicholas's Notes to the 'Complete Angler,' and elsewhere, as the original Bleak Hall of Izaak; but, unless he made a slip of the pen, it cannot be so; for in the conversation on the night spent there (chap. v.), Peter says, "Coridon and I will go up the water towards Ware." "And my scholar and I," replies Piscator, "will go *down* towards Waltham:" whereas this is some miles *below* Waltham. Walton's Bleak Hall was probably somewhere about Broxbourne; most likely not far from Want's Inn. In Major's edition of the 'Complete Angler,' the Rye House is figured as Bleak Hall, but neither as respects situation nor in any way does it answer to the description.

[Tottenham High Cross.]

the 'Court Roll,' in 1546. It appears to have been originally a wooden cross, covered with lead; this becoming decayed and rotten, was taken down by Dean Wood, about 1600, who erected on its site an octangular brick column, terminating in a pyramid. This still remains, but in 1809 it was repaired by subscription, and covered with stucco and "gothicised." It is at Tottenham that we first make the acquaintance of the characters in the 'Complete Angler,' and the cross is several times spoken of in the course of the work. What a treat it must have been to be greeted by the happy old man with a "welcome to Tottenham High Cross," and with him to "rest ourselves in this sweet shady

arbour (alas! there is none such *now* at Tottenham Cross) which Nature herself has woven with her own fine fingers; it is such a contexture of woodbines, sweetbriar, jessamine, and myrtle, and so interwoven, as will secure us both from the sun's violent heat, and from the approaching shower; and being sat down" to partake with him of "a bottle of sack, milk, oranges, and sugar, which all put together make a drink like nectar, indeed, too good for any but us anglers:" and then hear him proclaim his delight in simple rural enjoyment, in such lines as these:—

"Abused * mortals, did you know
Where joy, hearts-ease, and comforts grow,
You'd scorn proud towers,
And seek them in these bowers;
Where winds sometimes our woods perhaps may shake,
But blustering care could never tempest make,
Nor murmurs e'er come nigh us,
Saving of fountains that glide by us."

Let us return to our stream; and there is nought on either hand to call us away from it again for some time. The river is here very beautiful, and especially after passing Tottenham Mill, the old course of the Lea affords many a charming little picture. An old pollard willow with an angler under its shadow—a few cows, perhaps, standing in the water, and enjoying with philosophic quiescence the cooling luxury—perchance a punt in the middle of the river—a bright blue sky over head, reflected with a softened lustre in the clear stream—an abundance of yellow water-lilies at our feet—and the low banks decked with all gay flowers—these are the materials of the picture; and he who

* *i. e.* deceived.

has not his heart gladdened as he gazes on them, has yet to learn that there are things in heaven and earth not dreamt of in his philosophy. Walton was not one of these :

> " The meanest flow'ret of the vale,
> The simplest note that swells the gale,
> The common sun, the air, the skies,
> To him *were* opening Paradise."

And only such as, in a measure, can participate in these feelings and sympathies, are fitted to wander along Izaak Walton's Lea.

Near Lea Bridge, the *Ultima Thule* of incipient cockney fishermen, is the Horse and Groom, the favourite fishing-house of those of maturity in the gentle art. The grounds are picturesque, and the waters well stocked with fish. The fishery along the Lea is carefully preserved, with the exception of two or three intervening spots, from Ware to Temple Mills ; and let out for the most part to the persons who rent the several public-houses on its banks. From these the angler obtains permission to ply his cunning, on payment of a yearly subscription : the occasional angler pays by the day. By Lea Bridge the East London Water Company have an engine-house, and a canal runs from it, parallel to the towing-path of the Lea, to their works at Old Ford, a distance of about three miles. A little on our right is Low Layton, by some supposed (as we mentioned before) to be the Roman Durolitum, from which its name has been thought to be corrupted : but its name is plainly derived from that of the river. In the church is a monument to John Strype, the antiquary, who died at the ripe old age of ninety-

four; having been curate or minister of Layton ("without institution or induction," as Morant is careful to tell us) above sixty-eight years. He was an unwearying writer, having published thirteen folio and several octavo volumes on antiquities, besides others on divinity. John Bowyer, the celebrated printer, was also buried here.

Following our river in its windings along the meadows, we pass the White-house fishery and soon reach Temple Mills, between which and Bromley are the channels spoken of above as being, in the opinion of Spelman, Hawkins, and others, those made by Alfred when he altered the course of the Lea. They have all the appearance of being artificial, and so have those about Waltham: is there any reason why both should not have been formed by him?

A mile or two farther brings us to Old Ford, so called from the ancient road into Essex having here crossed the Lea. The works and basins of the East London Water Company are situated here, and cover an enormous extent of ground. On the road by the water-works there is a tea-gardens, called Clare Hall, that was formerly much frequented by London tradesmen; a machine with painted figures being provided for their amusement, which was described by its contriver as a mill for grinding old people young. But we suppose the march of intellect has lowered the reputation of this miller. Not long after passing the water-works we come to Bow Bridge, a neat granite structure, erected within the last seven or eight years, in the place of an extremely old bridge, of the origin of which we have the following account in Lysons:—"At an inquiry taken before Robert de Retford and Henry

Spigurnell, the king's justices in the year 1303, 'the jurors decided upon their oath, that at the time when Matilda,* the good queen of England, lived, the road from London to Essex was by a place called the Old Ford, where there was no bridge, and during great inundations was so extremely dangerous, that many passengers lost their lives; which coming to the good queen's ears, she caused the road to be turned where it now is, namely, between the towns of Stratford and Westham; and of her bounty caused the bridges and road to be made.'" The bridge afterwards fell into ruins and remained in a dangerous state, "till Queen Elinor of her bounty ordered it to be repaired, committing the charge of it to William de Capella, keeper of her chapel." Bow Bridge was much raised in the centre, so much that the name of the place, Stratford-le-Bow, is said to have arisen from its form. It was a curious old bridge, more curious perhaps than old London Bridge, and being narrow and without a footpath, a wooden foot-bridge was affixed to one side of it. Chaucer mentions Stratford-le-Bow in the prologue to his 'Canterbury Tales:'—

> "Frenche she spake full fayre and fetisly,
> After the scole of Stratford atte Bowe,
> For Frenche of Paris was to hire unknowe."

Bow church, which stands in the centre of the road on the London side of the bridge, is an ancient edifice, having been erected in the early part of the fourteenth century. It was thoroughly repaired a few years back; before the reparation it

* This is the same Matilda who built the bridge at Colham mentioned in our account of the Mole, *ante*, p. 60.

appearance was most venerable. It is still an interesting structure.

After leaving Bow our river flows past Bromley, whose church, situated at a very short distance from that of Bow, was, before the recent alterations and repairs, a little countrified building. But by this time our river has ceased to be either picturesque or interesting: lime-kilns, calico-printing and chemical works, and distilleries are the most prominent objects along its banks; and however useful these may be, they are not agreeable to either nose or eye. The walk, indeed, after passing Bromley-mills is pretty—the Thames with its shipping, and Shooters' Hill as a background, serving to produce some rather striking pictures. But we must pass onwards; our river is crossed near Blackwall by an excellent iron bridge; and, leaving the East India Docks a little on its right, it soon unites with the Thames—having, however, first lost its name, which it has changed for that of Bow Creek. It enters the Thames somewhat below the terminus of the Blackwall Railway, and opposite the Greenwich marshes.

Here then we part with the LEA; and though we have perhaps found nought in it to arouse our minds to feelings of grandeur, we have not wanted for that which has served to excite pleasurable sentiments, and to call up many agreeable associations. We almost, indeed, feel tempted in quitting it to apostrophize it as did Moses Browne in his 'Piscatory Eclogues:'—

> "Sweet stream,
> Whose scenes to solemn thoughts invite,
> May our calm life resemble thee,
> Such pleasure give, so useful be!"

WHITEFORD.

THE DOVE.

Not more indissolubly, and hardly more pleasantly, is the name of Izaak Walton wedded to that of the Lea, than is Charles Cotton's to that of his "beloved nymph, fair Dove!" and as his 'Second Part' was intended to complete the 'Complete Angler,' so may we offer a Ramble by the Dove as a compliment to our previous Ramble by the Lea: would that we could render our notices of these streams as bright and clear, as sparkling and as pleasant, as are theirs! How Walton loved his Lea we have already seen, and indeed it is well known; yet he loved her not better than did Cotton his Dove; repeatedly does he in his poems declare her to be without a rival:—

"Such streams Rome's yellow Tiber cannot show,
The Iberian Tagus, or Ligurian Po:
The Maese, the Danube, and the Rhine
Are puddle-water all, compared with thine:
And Loire's pure streams yet too polluted are,
With thine, much purer, to compare:
The rapid Garonne and the winding Seine
Are both too mean,
Beloved Dove, with thee
To vie priority;
Nay, Tame and Isis, when conjoin'd, submit,
And lay their trophies at thy silver feet."

There is a little hyperbole here, perhaps, yet what he says of her elsewhere is so near the truth, and expressed so happily, that we may start with it as our motto:—

> "Of all fair Thetis' daughters none so bright,
> So pleasant none to taste, none to the sight,
> None yield the patient angler such delight."

The Dove is indeed a pleasant river. Its name, pleasant in itself,* starts at its sound a crowd of pleasant associations, that flit before us in gay and brilliant or more sombre colours. We do not, however, intend to pursue them as we have done those we met along some other of our rivers. We mean to keep close beside our Dove, and not to be led astray by anything, however enticing.

From its source to its union with the Trent the Dove serves as a boundary to the counties of Staffordshire and Derbyshire; its whole length is about forty-five miles. It rises on the side of the huge hill called Axe-edge, and not far from its summit. Two streams which issue from the slope of Axe-edge, and unite near its base, contend for the honour of the parentage of our river. The eastward one is said to afford the larger quantity of water, and is by some termed the main stream; but it is from the source of the other that the separation of the counties is marked, and not far below it, and on the stream that flows from it, and a long way from the first stream, is the little village of Dove-head: moreover, common fame assigns to this the pre-eminence, and common fame we shall, in this instance, follow. This then we shall consider the source of the Dove. The water bubbles

* "The silver *Dove*, how pleasant is the name!"—*Cotton.*

[Source of the Dove.]

up through a little well, whose sides are protecte by a couple of flag-stones, with a larger one for covering, and a little sill-stone over which the wa ter trickles and runs merrily down the deep channe it has scooped out of the old hill. The little wel serves to supply water to a cottage by the roa side, a few yards above it; and many a travelle turns aside to partake of its ever-flowing bounty A graceful poem has been written by the Rev. J Edwards, called 'The Tour of the Dove:' he di not, as we intend, pursue the stream *from* i source, but upwards *to* it. As we, perchance, ma not again refer to his poem, we will here quote h notice of the spot we are at:—

"At length 't is gain'd, the heathy cloud-capt mountain
Not at the hamlet of Dove-head I rest,
But higher up, beside a bubbling fountain,
That makes within a little well its nest.
Here springs the Dove! and with a grateful zest
I drink its waters."

Axe-edge is a large and lofty hill; its edge—hardly axe-like—is a long waste, and affords a magnificent range of prospects. In one direction a wide stretch of the wild Peak district is seen; in another the eye ranges for an immense distance over the more cultivated lands of Staffordshire; while farther to the right the mountains of North Wales may be discerned like a faint line of cloud hanging over the horizon. When the Ordnance Survey was made in these parts a few years back, the summit of Axe-edge was fixed on as a principal station; and some idea of the extent of country embraced from it may be formed from the fact that powerful reflectors which were placed on one of the highest hills in Nottinghamshire, on the top of Lincoln cathedral, and on the summit of Snowdon, could be distinctly seen from it in clear weather: Lincoln being upwards of sixty, and Snowdon ninety miles distant. Besides the Dove, three other rivers, the Wye, the Goyte, and the Dane, rise on the slopes of Axe-edge.

In many a little sparkling water-break does the Dove make its way down the hill side, twisting too with strange perversity as it forces itself through and around every obstacle. Every yard of its early course affords a something worth noticing, yet not such as we can stop to describe. Dove-head, which is about a quarter of a mile down the stream from its source, need not detain us; it consists of but three or four houses; but somewhat lower, where it is crossed by a rustic bridge, is a small cottage farm-house, a rude, rough stone building in a strange wild spot, a sort of break in the mountain—it is a striking picture, aided not a little in effect by the rushing sound of the water

that here dashes over some huge detached stones. The Dove runs swiftly down the slope of the hill, and has wrought out some strange places in its way—at one time almost hidden in a deep gulley, at another foaming among the projecting crags and scattered fragments of rock that it has brought from the heights above. As it approaches the base of the mountain it is swelled by a great many little runnels from either side, which are for the most part strongly impregnated with iron, as is the rock also; hence the crumbling appearance it here presents. The other stream, which, as we said above, also rises high up Axe-edge, is not less beautiful than the one we have followed; they unite near the foot of the hill.

Here we come upon a widely different scene. Directly before us two large hills rise abruptly from broad meadows. The one is smooth, and in form like a broad-based cone; the other is less regular in shape, and has its sides broken and its sharp ridge singularly furrowed—both stand alone, rising majestically from the plain, and owning no fellowship with the neighbouring hills or with each other. The former is named Parker's Head, and the latter, we believe, High-broom. At a little distance on our right, on the high grounds we see before us, Longnor is seated, but is not visible from this plain. It is a moderate-sized town, but without anything that need call us aside. There is nothing of any kind remarkable about it, unless its market, which lasts only two hours, be so.

We will not linger then over this part of our journey—the Dove has so much to call for notice, that she can afford that we should slight what in another river we might be glad to dwell on. The

scenery here is pleasing, but the river may be left at the bridge that leads to Longnor, and a path across the fields on the left, above the river, may be taken, which will afford not a few agreeable sketches. Nearly all the land here is pasture, and at haymaking season the meadows present a very lively appearance. The river for some distance is of small size, unless when swelled by long rains or melted snow. We pass two or three quaint cottages by the way, both by Crowdycote and Pilsbury, but there is nought to stop at. Hartington, a town we soon come upon, has also little to detain us; even its fair is a dull one. Let us then step quickly along the meadows for a mile or two, which will bring us to that little fishing-house every reader of the 'Angler' has so lively a recollection of.

If the rambler has followed the Dove thus far from its source, he will probably have felt somewhat of disappointment. It is a pretty stream, and the country about it is fine, but he will feel that its beauties are not such as to warrant the eulogies that have been lavished upon them, or that its source and the first mile or two of its course promised. Let him not despair. The Dove is not always alike brilliant, but sometimes in a moment, and when least expected, she makes her companion's heart leap up, though for awhile, with true feminine perversity, she loves to try her follower's faith. As he comes upon this spot from the somewhat dull meadows, the rambler will be ready, with Viator, to exclaim, "Now I think this a marvellous pretty place;" especially if he looks "from the brink of the hill, upon the river, the vale it winds through like a snake, and the little

[Cotton's Fishing-house.]

fishing-house." This fishing-house, as the reader will remember, was built by Cotton, and by him dedicated to anglers, as an inscription he placed over it testifies: besides the inscription, he tells us, "You will see over the door the two first letters of my father Walton's name and mine, twisted in cipher." The house still stands as it did, and the description of it that Cotton puts into the mouth of Viator is still true to the letter. "It stands in a kind of peninsula, with a delicate clear river about it; I am the most pleased with this little house of anything I ever saw. I dare hardly go in, lest I should not like it so well within as with-

out; but by your leave I 'll try. Why this is better and better: fine lights, finely wainscoted, and all exceeding neat, with a marble table and all in the middle!" We approached the little house, like Viator, with some misgivings. 'The Complete Angler' was an early favourite of ours, and we had often in childhood wished to see the spot its author so loved to speak of. But we remembered to have read with much puerile indignation in a book from which we learnt our British geography—'The Juvenile Tourist'—an account of a visit to this sanctorum: we forget the particulars, but know that the house was described as being in ruins, the roof decayed, the inscription illegible, the table broken, and instead of being "all exceeding neat," all overgrown with dank moss and weeds; while, to crown all, the only access was through a broken window. We had not ventured to inquire about its condition before we visited it, and were almost as delighted as Viator with its appearance. There it stands as fresh, as perfect, and as neat as when he stepped into it. Every part has been carefully restored, and there is something quite charming about its new-old look. The inscription—PISCATORIBUS SACRUM—is still over the door, and below it is that pleasant conceit the intertwisted cipher. The cipher and inscription have of course been newly cut, as has also the date of its erection, 1674. The building is a substantial one of sandstone, and likely with care to last as long as it has already lasted. The interior is exceedingly neat, and all, to the stone floor, quite clean. A dozen comfortable arm-chairs (we wish they had been a little more antique in fashion and appearance) are placed in it, and in the midst

is the marble table—whether the original or not we did not care to inquire. It is sheltered by a few fir and other trees, and its situation is exactly what Cotton has said, a sort of peninsula. Further we shall not venture—has not old Izaak himself said, in a marginal note to Cotton's account, "Some part of the fishing-house has been described; but the pleasantness of the river, mountains, and meadows about it cannot, unless Sir Philip Sidney or Mr. Cotton's father were again alive to do it"?

Izaak Walton's 'Angler' has been often imitated; in our own day Sir Humphry Davy and Mr. Scrope have chosen it for their model, without, perhaps, attaining to the ease, variety, or naturalness of the original. Unquestionably Cotton's Second Part is the best imitation, and might, perhaps, with more care, have been rendered equal to the First. It was written, as its author tells Walton in his prefatory letter, in ten days, and bears some marks of the haste in which it was written. It is very clever, and not less amusing than the First Part. Cotton was a noble-minded man, and it is a beautiful thing to see the earnest affection that subsisted between him and his "father" Walton, as he constantly calls him. They were not in any way related, as might be supposed by one unused to the literature of that age; the practice of calling some one of prominent talent "father" was at that and a somewhat earlier period very common. Ben Jonson had several such adopted sons. Izaak, it will be seen, in the letter he prefixed to the first edition of Cotton's continuation, allowed the title and used it—he subscribes himself his "most affectionate father and friend."

Cotton cannot be said to stand in the first rank either as a writer of prose or as a poet. His poetry indeed will hardly procure for him the title of poet in its highest sense; yet it is always clear, vivid, and manly. His 'Virgil Travestie' is that which met with most success at the time, but few will regret that it has ceased to have a real life—that it is scarcely known except to the student of English literature. Its cleverness every one who has read it will admit, but it is marred by many blemishes; of his 'Burlesque upon Burlesque' the same may be said. His smaller pieces, however, are so pleasing in their structure, so unaffected, and so agreeable, that they will maintain their place in all collections, and be among the most read of the minor poetry of the period to which they belong. All the excellences that mark his shorter poems pervade his prose, which, however, unfortunately consists for the chief part of translations, that have lost their interest, with the exception of Montaigne's 'Essays,' which will probably by most Englishmen be read with more hearty relish in Cotton's translation than in the original. Probably we have no other translation in our language into which the spirit of the original is so thoroughly transfused. But Cotton and Montaigne had much resemblance, and it was carried down to their style; the easy careless mode of Montaigne sat without awkwardness on his translator. With all his excellent qualities, there is something depressing to the spirit as we think of the history of Cotton. It is involved in some obscurity, but it is plain that his life, at least during the last few years, was one of sorrow; it must have been very sorrowful, if the tradition be true that he was hunted from place to place by

importunate creditors, and at length died by his own hand in a prison. Let none speak of him harshly—who can say what the effect of such cruel poverty must have been on a mind so sensitive as his? Yet his life affords a lesson: with talents of a high order, with tastes of a pure and graceful kind, with the most generous sensibilities, we see him yielding to the prevalent follies, falling short of the promise of his early years, and sinking gradually even in his literary character. We judge him not unkindly; far be it from us: we know few so calculated to obtain the regard and sympathy of his reader—few whose character, as displayed in their writings, is more generous, kind, and manly than that of Cotton in his earlier days; and the very sensibility of his mind and the strength of his affections would be like but to increase the keenness and poignant force of the wretched circumstances which overcame him. His later writings were no doubt adapted to the ruling taste, and it may have been necessary to him to obtain as many readers as possible; but whatever may palliate, nothing can excuse the growing coarseness of his later productions—the last edition of his 'Virgil Travestie' contains much that is offensive to good feeling which is not to be found in the first.

Almost directly after leaving the fishing-house we come to a spot where the river, quitting the broad meadows, forces its way through the solid rock, a detached fragment of which, like a spire in shape, springs firmly from the river, which is closed in on each side by lofty hills. We shall let our old friends describe the scene. Take Cotton's account first. "*Viator.* What have we got

here? A rock springing up in the middle of the river!—this is one of the oddest sights that I ever saw. *Piscator.* Why, sir, from that pike that you see standing up there distant from the rock, this is called Pike-pool; and young Master Izaak Walton was so pleased with it as to draw it in landscape in black and white, in a blank book I have at home." We have not young Master Izaak's drawing in black and white to offer our readers, but here is a sketch that may perhaps afford some notion of what it is like. But we must not omit old Master Izaak's picture, if we cannot have the young one's. He says in a marginal note to the passage we have just quoted—"It is a rock in the fashion of a spire steeple, and almost as big. It stands in the midst of the river Dove, and not far from Mr. Cotton's house, below which place this delicate river takes a swift career betwixt many mighty rocks, much higher and bigger than St. Paul's church before it was burnt." This sentence is followed by another, in which Walton has made a strange blunder: he says—"And this Dove, being opposed by one of the highest of them, has at last forced itself a way through it; and after a mile's concealment appears again with more glory and beauty than before that opposition, running through the most pleasant valleys and most fruitful meadows that this nation can justly boast of." This is an entire mistake; the Dove is nowhere concealed, and it is not easy to tell how Walton could have so erred, unless, writing at a distance, he had confounded in his memory the Dove with the Hamps or Manifold, both of which run into it, and which, as we shall see, *are* concealed for more than a mile. Cotton, in his poem of the

[Pike Pool.]

'Wonders of the Peake,' declares that the beauty of the river is his only solace for the many discomforts of a residence in these parts :—

> "In this so craggy ill-contriv'd a nook
> Of this our little world, this pretty brook,
> Alas! is all the recompense I share,
> For all the intemperances of the air,
> Perpetual winter, endless solitude,
> Or the society of men so rude,
> That it is ten times worse."

And he says nearly the same in his 'Epistle to Brome.' How he enjoyed these scenes we may gather from his verses addressed to Walton, called 'The Retirement,' and which are perhaps the most poetical, as they are certainly the most beautiful of his verses. We may quote a stanza or two :—

> "Good God! how sweet are all things here!
> How beautiful the fields appear!
> * * * * *
> Oh how happy here 's our leisure!
> Oh how innocent our pleasure!
> Oh ye valleys, oh ye mountains!
> Oh ye groves and crystal fountains!
> How I love, at liberty,
> By turns to come and visit ye.
>
> Dear Solitude, the Soul's best friend,
> That man acquainted with himself dost make,
> And all his Maker's wonders to intend:
> With thee I here converse at will,
> And would be glad to do so still,
> For it is thou alone that keep'st the Soul awake.
> * * * * *
>
> Oh, my beloved nymph, fair Dove!
> Princess of rivers! how I love
> Upon thy flow'ry banks to lie;
> And view thy silver stream,
> When gilded by the summer's beam!

And in it all thy wanton fry,
Playing at liberty;
And with my angle, upon them
The all of treachery
I ever learnt, industriously to try."

But it is time we left this place; and our river leads us, after quitting the pike, for a short distance between two hills, whose sides are clothed with rich foliage down to the water. Very beautiful is this spot, and from the contrast it presents to those parts we have hitherto traversed, the rambler will be tempted to linger here; but we may not stay. We soon emerge from the shady covert, and gain a wide and clear space. Our river quickly brings us to Woscote bridge, and we see Woscote, or rather Wolfscote, a huge and broken mountain, on our left. Here the hills close again, and the little stream makes its way through a long, narrow, and desolate valley, called Narrow-dale. The scenery along this dale is very striking; high and steep hills tower on either side; their slopes for the most part bare of all foliage, though here and there a few stunted trees sprout out. Vast lumps of crag project from them, and are scattered about their bases; while their surfaces are clothed with a mossy turf or patches of furze. The rocks are in many parts quite bare, or covered only with lichens of various kinds, and decked with some of the stone-ferns and a few wild geraniums. Large spaces are broken up into what all who have travelled in a mountainous country know so well as *screes*, loose broken fragments of rock that lie at almost any angle on the sides of the mountains, and that will slide down many yards together whenever slightly disturbed. The hills here descend ab-

ruptly on each side, and leave only a narrow channel at their bases for the little river that dashes hastily along. This dale is not often visited, yet most who come from all parts to visit Dove-dale might, without great inconvenience, extend their journey to it, and it would amply repay them. Although it has few of the lovelier features of that far-famed place, it has a barren grandeur scarcely to be found there. The mountains are of large size and fine form, and their sides torn and broken into wild shapes, or, pierced with gloomy hollows, appear as if they had been rent and upheaved by some mighty earthquake. The mind is overpowered by the majesty of nature, and is glad of the lively murmur of the stream, the rapid darting of the startled fish, the flight of a martin or a kingfisher, or any other of those little objects that at such a time call off the thoughts from what becomes depressing from its sublimity. The stepping-stones are quite companionable. We may imagine that Cotton had this place in his memory when he wrote the following stanza:—

"Oh my beloved rocks, that rise
To awe the earth and brave the skies!
From some aspiring mountain's crown,
How dearly do I love,
Giddy with pleasure to look down;
Or, from the vales, to view the noble heights above!
Oh my beloved caves, from dog-star's heat
And all anxieties my safe retreat!
What safety, privacy, what true delight
In the artificial light
Your gloomy entrails make,
Have I taken, do I take!
How oft when grief has made me fly,
To hide me from society,
Ev'n of my dearest friends, have I

In your recesses' friendly shade
All my sorrows open laid,
And my most secret woes intrusted to your privacy!"

Dr. Plot, in his History of Staffordshire, says, that the "inhabitants of Narrow-dale, when the sun is nearest the tropic of Capricorn, never see it; and when it does begin to appear, they do not see it till about one o'clock, which they call 'Narrow-dale noon,' using it as a proverb when anything is delayed."

Narrow-dale is almost abandoned to the angler, whose untiring zeal suffers him to leave no place unvisited where fish may be found; and, as is well known, few rivers are more esteemed by those who ply the gentle art than our Dove: and very justly is she so favoured. Every fisherman owes a large debt of gratitude to the authors of the 'Complete Angler;' and what true fisherman would neglect a river they have rendered so famous —even if it were not *now* all that *they* found it? But happily Dove needs no such reasons to induce the angler to resort to her—she will still yield a heavy creel to whoever knows how to cast his line aright, and will heed the directions of her prime piscator. Yet it is said the Dove has been in some danger of losing her fame from the carelessness of her guardians. The waters of the Dove are, however, now "preserved" with at least sufficient strictness—though poaching is still far from uncommon hereabout, as we learnt from the hardy peasants of Hope-dale and Alstonfield.

From the narrowness of the dale and its frequent windings, we can see but a little way either before or behind us; but to make amends, we obtain a surprising number of new and different pictures in

our way—every turn presents us with a fresh one, and each depends not at all on that we have passed, or the next we are to come to, for its completion. Towards the end of the dale we see an enormous, rough-looking mountain on our left, with a rather startling horse-road brought over it to a rude bridge at our feet. This is the mountain Viator came over on his way from Ashbourn, and which, as he looked from its summit, before he descended it, he pronounced to be "the strangest place that ever, sure, men and horses went down; and that, if there be any safety at all, the safest way is to alight;" and he declares he has "a double fear, both of breaking my neck and my horse's falling on me; for it is as steep as a penthouse," and thinks it "were best lay my heels in my neck and tumble down." We do not wonder when he finds himself safe at the bottom, and inquires what the hill is called, to hear him, on being told Hanson Toot, exclaim, "Well, farewell, Hanson Toot, I 'll no more on thee; I 'll go twenty miles about first." This is a most uncivilised-looking place now, but it was doubtless far more so then. There is a bridge here, and a rough one too, but it is not that which led Viator to ask "What 's here, the sign of a bridge? Do you use to travel with wheel-barrows in this country?" "Not that I ever saw," replies Piscator; "Why do you ask this question?" "Because," returns the other, "this bridge certainly was made for nothing else: why, a mouse can hardly go over it; 't is not two fingers broad." Piscator tells him he has "rid over the bridge many a dark night;" to which the other quickly replies—"Why, according to the French

proverb, and 'tis a good one among a great many of worse sense and sound that language abounds in, Ce que Dieu garde, est bien gardé: They whom God takes care of are in safe protection. But, let me tell you, I would not ride over it for a thousand pounds, nor fall off it for two; and yet I think I dare venture on foot; though, if you were not by to laugh at me, I should do it on all four." The present bridge is not so terrific, but there is still more than one across the Dove that will put the rambler in mind of Viator and his wheelbarrow travelling. Just here a few cottages are collected together, though in a most disjointed fashion, and there is also a mill from which the valley from hence to Dove-dale takes the name of Mill-dale. The road from the bridge runs up a narrow vale about a mile in length, and of a singularly barren, almost dreary aspect. It is called Hope-dale, and truly hope is a virtue that would seem to be here much required. There are two or three stone-quarries up this dale, and a few scattered cottages. At its extremity a road of about half a mile will bring the traveller to Alstonfield, where there are a couple of public-houses, at either of which he may put up, if he be disposed to examine these parts a little more carefully than we have done. We spent a few days in this neighbourhood very agreeably. This was the road up which Piscator led his companion after crossing the bridge, and here it was that Viator cried out, "What have we here—a church? As I'm an honest man, a very pretty church! Have you churches in this country, Sir? *Pisc.* You see we have: but had you seen none, why should you make that doubt, Sir? *Viat.* Why, if you will

not be angry, I'll tell you: I thought myself a stage or two beyond Christendom."

Alstonfield church is, as Viator says, a very pretty church, and though a stranger will not now-a-days be exactly led to think himself a stage beyond Christendom, he will find this neighbourhood a sufficiently out-of-the-way one to reward him for visiting it. The Staffordshire quarry-men he will see about here are a race of broad-shouldered sons of Anak, and their conversation is carried on in a dialect that will require some attention to comprehend. There is a good deal of character about some of them, and we are inclined to fancy that a concocter of magazine stories might pick up a few hints from them.

From the bridge mentioned above, to the commencement of Dove-dale, about a mile, is called Mill-dale, a barren, wild-looking place, with steep and craggy hills; but though it has enough of character to render description easy, it would be to little purpose to describe it. Mill-dale serves to harmonize the more stern features of Narrow-dale with the softer graces of Dove-dale.

In speaking of Dove-dale, we shall not attempt to notice those who have by their writings, or in any other way, come to have their names associated with it. Byron, Davy, Chantrey, Hofland, stand as the representatives of poetry, science, and art, who have done honour to it; Mundy, Gisborne, Edwards, and Montgomery, with an almost endless list of other poets of minor rank, have sung its praises; painters innumerable have depicted its various features, while guides without number have described it. To quote all who have written sensibly about it would be impossible, and if possible

[Dove's Hole, Northern Entrance of Dove Dale.]

not very agreeable:—it might be pleasanter to borrow from those who have penned most exquisite nonsense upon it, but they are so many, it would be very little easier. We shall leave all—walk steadily through the dale—think not of what any have said, and try to give a plain account of it. We cannot avoid repeating, but we may abstain from copying.

Dove-dale deserves its reputation—a thing that cannot always be predicated of those much-praised places. It satisfies you at first, and it increases in interest on a second and third visit. Every angler of taste, and every sketcher who has spent several following days amidst its scenery, is ready to acknowledge that it grows on acquaintance. There is many a more sublime spot, many a more beautiful, along some other of the rivers of England than is to be found here; but none has a dale that can show such a continuance of fine scenery. Dove-dale is a long winding valley, with the swift river running through it, and lofty hills on either side. The hills are sometimes covered with foliage to the water's edge, at others nearly bare, with large masses of crag projecting from their sides in strange forms, and often in threatening positions. It is at least three miles in length, and for the whole of this distance there is a succession of rich, various, and striking scenery. As you enter it from the north, as we do, a huge mass of dark naked rock stands prominent, a magnificent object; worn by the storms of ages—worn, but still undecayed, it slopes precipitously to the water which foams over its base; while a lesser mass lifts up its head on the other side of the stream. The larger rock, on the left, displays an

enormous cavity, known as Dove's Hole, but which does not reach far into the rock. There are other smaller holes about, and the whole mass appears as if time and violence had been unable to destroy it, although powerful enough to impress deeply their marks upon it. Beyond this noble barrier another barren mountain is seen, which with its heavy form closes the view. Before the sun has risen high over the hills, or after he has sunk behind them, *this* is a most impressive scene, verging as nearly as may be on the sublime—if it be not sublime—and it needs but the roll of the thunder-storm to render it sublime in the highest degree. Visitors generally enter the other end of the dale, and content themselves with coming thus far, but one of the noblest views is lost if this rock be not passed, and the dale viewed from beyond it.

After passing this rock, we find ourselves in a somewhat clearer spot, but one hardly a whit less wild. Here the dale takes a sudden turn, and we soon see before us that huge rocky pillar to which the name of Pickering Tor has been given. The prospect here is most magnificent. On the right is Pickering Tor, an enormous mass of isolated crag; its lofty head, bare, black, and weather-beaten, towers majestically over all else; its sides are covered with the grey lichen, a few stone-ferns find a root in its crevices, and light underwood connects its base with the foot of the mountain. Plumes of graceful birches and hazels adorn the slopes of the mountains and dip into the clear stream. The sides of the hills on the left are barer of foliage, and broken up into boldly detached pinnacles, precipitous scarps, and deep gulleys, as if by the force of terrific tempests or

the erosion of mighty floods. On the brow of the farthest mountain, a bulky fragment of rock (the Watchbox) seems nodding to its fall. Nowhere else does the dale suggest so powerful an idea of the force of that wonderful convulsion of nature by which it must have been formed. And nowhere in nature will the solitary rambler feel more strongly that his mind has been framed and fitted to converse with Nature—that the beautiful and the grand have been contrived to find a response in his inmost man. It is in such scenes, and when the low cares and prizes of the world are forgotten,—when self is banished—when the soul, scarcely conscious of the lofty emotions that have arisen within it, has been delivered up to the mysterious influence, and the thoughts have become almost a part of the scene,—it is then that Nature acknowledges the homage of her true votary, and inspires him with a bliss too deep for words—almost too exquisite for his frail powers to sustain.

But the sound of merriment from yonder cheerful group climbing the steep hill to Reynard's Hall, interrupts us; and the laughter, if it was a momentary discord, is welcome as the light air after a solemn prelude. Dove-dale is the very paradise of 'gipsy-parties,'—their number is legion and their variety infinite. High-born and accomplished ladies, with well-bred gallants, and their liveried attendants, groups graceful as those delightful ones Watteau so charmingly painted—and, it must be admitted, almost as formal; pleasant family-parties, with heaps of children, and well-stored hampers, smiling papas, and staid elder daughters with their most attentive young gentle-

[Pickering Tor and the Watchbox.]

men; merry, noisy country lots of a dozen youths and red-cheeked maidens, with one or two cheerful dames; are to be seen every bright day the summer through. They begin to arrive long before noon, and then meet you at every turn, rambling in pairs after the charms of the dale (and thinking more of each other's), or trying which shall climb the hill's top soonest, or run over the stepping-stones quickest, or else seated in some shady nook partaking of their stores, or—but what could cause such a laugh and shout as ascended from yon hollow? Let us mount the knoll and see.—Make haste, make haste! Oh, you simpleton, you've lost it! Oh, that *we* were young again! though even now we would not have missed *such* a chance! Gentle reader, don't be impatient; and when you are told what caused the outcry, don't be angry; it was a game at kiss-in-the-ring played by a score of merry Derbyshire lads and very pretty lasses, and a broad-shouldered oaf, a well built limber-legged lad of twenty lost his—it would have provoked a hermit, and surely we, who do not profess to have forgotten beauty's power, may be forgiven.

As we descend the dale, the Staffordshire hills become very precipitous, and at length dip almost perpendicularly into the Dove. Here all progress is barred on the Staffordshire side of the river. The path throughout Dove-dale, as we ought to have mentioned before, is on the Derbyshire side of the dale; there is a roadway carried for some distance along the Staffordshire side from Ilam, but it ends abruptly. We made our way for some space farther, but it was with difficulty, and only by scrambling along the face of the rock at some

height above the water, and at last, where it appeared impossible to go on and not easy to return, we were glad to get down and escape to the other side by wading across the stream. Reynard's Hall, mentioned above, is a vast cavity in the rocks on the Derbyshire side of the river; it has an arched entrance of about forty feet high, and half as wide, but it is not very deep. The views up and down the dale from its mouth are very fine. Attached to it is another cave, known as Reynard's Kitchen; they have obtained their titles from a tradition that a robber of that name in olden times lived in the one, and used the other to broil his chop and stew his potatoes in. On the opposite side of the river is a projecting mass of rock, called Dove-dale Church, from some fancied resemblance to such an edifice. We may as well get rid of these Dove-dale names at once. There is a rare batch of them—almost every lump of rock and every hole has a name—but we, unfortunately, forget best part of them, or we might string them together as Homer did his heroes, and we are not sure that they would make a much more cacophonous jingle. Here are sugar-loaves, and shoulders of mutton; twelve apostles, and foxes' holes; ever so many spires and chests; with tors and caves innumerable. Dove-dale, however, is not alone; before all the world Derbyshire stands pre-eminent in the art of naming things—every turn in every cave in the county has a name—some half a dozen—and then every thing in every such compartment, to a stalagmite as big as a thimble, has one appropriated to itself. Such names too! Half the pleasantest places in the county have the edge taken off their enjoyment, by

the expectations raised by the name. Think of cottages of contentment, romantic rocks, Calypso's caves, grottoes of Paradise, and so forth, *ad infinitum*. It must be admitted, however, to the honour of Derbyshire, that within the last century or two the nomenclature has become refined and polite, as well as the county. How much it has been refined may easily be seen by comparing the philosopher Hobbes' poem 'De Mirabilibus Pecci' with the last "Matlock Guide."

We shall never get through the dale at this rate. We must stalk along the remainder of it at a pace, we hope our readers, when they visit it, will not imitate. From Reynard's Hall the scenery is more soft and gentle, the hills are not less craggy, but less abrupt in form and more clothed with verdure. Trees of all kinds, now dipping their pendant branches into the water, which reflects them with a softened grace, and now standing firm and erect in well composed groups, or crowded up the hill sides, add their brilliant or sombre colours and tremulous light and shadow to the landscape; gay and lovely flowers crowd every spot, and start as if sown by fairy fingers in the inaccessible crevices of the naked rock;* while the river murmurs its quiet tone over its pebbly bed, or dashes in some pretty falls over the dark rock, or collecting in a deep pool where its motion is unseen, reflects an unbroken picture of the hills, trees, flowers, and mossy

* The peasantry of this neighbourhood say that the fairies plant the flowers in such places. The writer of a useful guide-book to this district mentions this, but gives a very serious shake of his head at the *superstition*, as he terms it, with all the emphasis Italics can impart.

stones, the bright azure sky, and perhaps some happy group reclining by its margin. Such scenes would touch the heart of the most indurated, they fill with gladness his who loves nature and who loves man. He is impressed

> "not only with the sense
> Of present pleasure, but with pleasing thought
> That in this moment there is life and food
> For future years."

Leaving Dove-dale we pass by the Izaak Walton, an inn conveniently situated for those who wish to examine Dove-dale at leisure, and much frequented also by anglers, and speedily reach Ilam, a very beautiful place, and just by, though not upon, our river. Few who visit Dove-dale depart without seeing Ilam, and it is well worth seeing. The village, which is small, is the property of Jesse Watts Russell, Esq., who resides in Ilam Hall. The little village is quite a curiosity; it seems really, as Walton says of one of his Lea scenes, "too pretty to look on but only on holidays." The cottages are all new Swiss buildings, as clean and trim as so many architects' models. In the midst of the village stands a cross, erected by Mr. Russell to the memory of his late wife: a copy, it seemed to us, of that at Waltham, and not a paltry imitation, but elaborately and beautifully carved, and with statues of excellent workmanship in the niches. At the foot of the cross flows a fountain of cool and clear water. An inscription, of red and black letters in the olden character, tells her virtues to whom the cross is raised, her gentleness, her sympathy with the indigent and distressed of the village, and, in allusion to the fountain, adds—

"Dried is that fount: but long may this endure
To be a well of comfort to the poor."

As we have said, this is a village of much beauty, and the houses have a picturesque and somewhat piquant appearance, that, uniting with the richness of the natural scenery, is uncommonly pleasing. It is almost too bad to utter a complaint where so much has been done, and with such good taste, yet we may just whisper a wish that the cottages had been of a somewhat different kind—had been constructed more in keeping with the nature of the scenery, more under the influence of the genius of the place. Swiss cottages are for Swiss mountains and Swiss peasants. Their peaked gables and projecting roofs want the quaint costumes about them and the snowy hills above. With the green slope of an English hill they do not harmonize naturally, and smock-frocks and carters' felts look uncomely and foreign to them. We cannot put our stalwart peasantry into the livery of high-crowned hats, and their wives into showy corsets and short petticoats, and would rather see them about good old English porches in their own English habits. There is plenty of room surely for the display of taste and skill in adapting and remoulding old forms, without its being necessary to transfer exotics bodily. The genuine old English cottages appear indigenous to the soil, and adapt themselves as naturally to their several localities as do the native wild-flowers. And they are as various too. No one would ever mistake the romantic Cumberland cottage for the half-wooden one of Kent, or that for the quaint and homely thatch of Hampshire; or wish either to occupy the other's place. It is the fashion now, especially in Derbyshire, to build these Swiss cottages

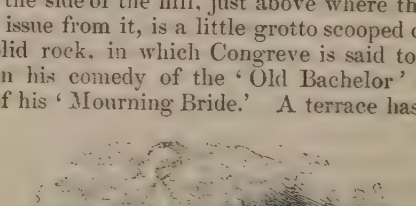
(as they are called, for they are in truth little more Swiss than they are English), and they have sadly disturbed the feeling of *repose* about many a lovely spot; a few lines, therefore, of regret may be forgiven to one who does not like to see the character of English scenery so frittered away. After all, it is scarcely fair to make Ilam the text upon which to hang these remarks; it is a very pretty place, and the regard which its owner has shown for the comfort of his less wealthy neighbours will add not a little to the pleasure it excites in the visitor. Ilam Hall is also a nearly new building, and on the whole a very handsome one. It is in the Tudor style, with a flag-tower, which is a rather fine feature. The interior is said to be very elegant and richly furnished, and to contain some good pictures; but we can only speak of it from report. The grounds are very beautiful, and of uncommon interest. Ilam church, which stands within them and nearly opposite to the house, is an old ivy-covered edifice, and very picturesque. A mausoleum has been erected on its north side to contain a monumental group to the memory of Pike Watts, Esq. It is one of the finest of the works of Chantrey, and probably no other of that great artist's productions is so fortunately placed. The venerable man is represented raising himself from his death-bed and stretching forth his arms in the act of imploring a blessing on his only daughter and her children, who surround his couch. The effect of this touching work is undisturbed by any surrounding objects, it is alone in the chapel, whose sides and floor are of a sober tone, whilst the light is subdued by the stained glass through which it passes; the chapel, too, is shut off from the body of the church by an

ample curtain that is suspended at its door. It might have been owing somewhat, no doubt, to the stillness, and somewhat to the elevation of mind arising from having spent many hours amid the grand scenery of the neighbourhood—but we felt, as we gazed upon it, as if no monumental sculpture had ever before so affected us. The power of the artist, perhaps the associated feeling called forth by the simple yet impressive incident represented, seized hold of us, and had we not been broken in upon, we should long have confessed the mastery. We left it lingeringly, and not without returning more than once ere we finally quitted the church.

From the base of the hill, on whose southern side stands the mansion, two rivers, the Hamps and the Manifold, emerge within fifteen yards of each other, after having flowed in separate subterraneous channels for several miles. The Hamps sinks into the earth a little above the bridge at Leek Waterhouses, about six miles west of Ilam; the Manifold near Wetton Mill, nearly five miles northward. That these are really the streams which are swallowed up in those places has been frequently proved by watching the exit of various light bodies that have been absorbed at the swallows. The waters of the two rivers differ in temperature at their emergence about two degrees, so that it is clear that they do not anywhere intermingle. It is not to be understood, however, that these rivers entirely disappear at the above places. In dry seasons the water is wholly absorbed in the fissures of the rocks, but at other times a considerable quantity is left to supply their channels which form a junction about four miles above Ilam. From the place where these rivers emerge the

grounds of Ilam assume a highly picturesque appearance, a fine sheet of water spreads from your feet, the hill rises in a bold cliff, and all that art can accomplish has been done to add to it features, while a hanging wood of most luxuriant foliage fills up the distance.

On the side of the hill, just above where the two rivers issue from it, is a little grotto scooped out of the solid rock, in which Congreve is said to have written his comedy of the 'Old Bachelor' and a part of his 'Mourning Bride.' A terrace has been



[Congreve's Grotto.]

formed along the hill in front of the grotto, where the poet might have paced while waiting for inspiration. Here, shut out from noise and folly, with the richest charms of nature spread before him, a poet could not desire a more fitting spot in which to woo the muse. Yet it suggested not lovely or graceful images to his pen. A soul less susceptible of the beautiful in nature, of the tender and noble in humanity, than that of Congreve, never uttered

its emotions. His page, frosted over with the glittering sparkles of an icy wit, gives not back a ray of warmth. Everything pure and elevated in sentiment is banished from his vision. He seems to have past through the world without imagining the possibility of the existence of aught in it generous or good. If it were such as the cold-hearted wit represented, it would be a worse world than the most bitter misanthrope ever drew from his heated imagination. There is something revolting in the heartless apathy with which he stands by and describes with blank indifference all that is most vile. Some slight excuse may be found for the coarseness of some with whom he has been compared in their apparent warmth of temperament and the dissolute manners of their age; but such an entire lack of sympathy with the vice he exhibits—and that there is such a thing as virtue he appears quite unconscious—is almost fiendlike. Most who know his comedies will think that Hallam has estimated him too highly when he says,* "though not, I think, the first, he is undeniably among the first names." The remainder of his sketch will, however, go far to destroy the high character the commencement of it assigns him. Hallam must mean that he is among the first names of his age. It were else an offence to all true poetry, to all moral grandeur, to say so. Assuredly he, in whose page no fine feeling is appealed to, no generous sentiment is aroused, no tender chord touched, where impurity is displayed uncovered, and vice is arrayed in all the brilliancy of wit, cannot stand among our first. Books are our best teachers, the poets are our prophets, and "our English, the language ever

* Hist. of Lit. iii. p. 516.

famous and foremost in the achievement of true liberty" and of truth, contains the utterances of some of the noblest who ever breathed:—as truly as finely does Milton exclaim, "our sage and serious Spenser I dare to think a better teacher than Scotus or Aquinas." Chaucer, Spenser, Shakspere, Milton! May he take his place among them? No, surely. Their temple he belongs not to. Their worth he cannot estimate. Their glory he may not share. He sits in the seat of the scorner.

His wit, indeed, is of a high rank, almost as high as it has been commonly rated. It is abundant, but not very choice, nor very original, and as much feebler than that of South or Butler, of Swift or Sterne, or even of Farquhar, as genuine wit well can be. His characters display little variety or keeping. The conception of his plot is generally confused, the carrying of it on exhibits a constant neglect of propriety and probability. He is not a master of his craft. He affected to value lightly his literary works, and to speak of them as the amusements of his idle hours; and as such we may read them, and forget them.

As we quit Ilam and pass over Bunster Hill to our Dove, the vast form of Thorpe Clouds rears its lofty head before us. This is the hill that formed so prominent a feature from the lower part of Dove-dale. It is a striking object for many miles as we *ascend* the river, with the little church of Thorpe nestling under it, and a few homesteads dotting its side. Those who think it necessary to be provided with a guide to Dove-dale can always obtain one at Thorpe. There is not anything of interest about the village. In the adjoining village of Tessington a graceful custom still lingers—a

[Thorpe.]

harmless relic of distant times. On Holy Thursday, after a sermon preached in the church, the villagers go in procession, with the clergyman at their head, to the several wells in the parish; at each of which some portion of the church service is read and a hymn sung. The wells are for the occasion decked with an abundance of flowers formed into designs, mottoes, and chaplets; the whole ceremony being ended, the remainder of the day is devoted to festivity. Open house is kept by all in proportion to their means, and all who come are welcomed. This "well-flowering," as it is called, is spoken of as singularly interesting and beautiful by those who have seen it, and the inhabitants of Tis-

sington enter into the spirit of the festival with much zest. A similar practice prevails in Tideswell, Wirksworth, Bakewell, and, we believe, some other places in Derbyshire, but nowhere is it carried out so heartily as in Tissington. References to a somewhat similar custom are not uncommon in the poets of antiquity; and Milton in his 'Comus' says of the goddess Sabrina—

> "the shepherds at their festivals
> Carol her goodness loud in rustic lays,
> And throw sweet garland wreaths into her stream,
> Of pansies, pinks, or gaudy daffodils."

The practice of decking fountains with flowers and singing their praises seems to have been common with many of the nations of antiquity. The reader will recollect, perhaps, that when the Israelites were at Beer, they "sang this song, 'Spring up, O well; sing ye unto it'" (Numbers xxi. 16, &c.). The custom prevailed among the various people converted to Christianity, and was encouraged by the priests in the earlier ages of the church, and only swept away in this country at the Reformation. None would desire to see such a custom generally revived, nor is it likely to be; yet he must be singularly sour-tempered who does not wish that it may long live in Tessington.

The Dove, after it quits Dove-dale, is no longer pent up between close hills, but strays as it lists through broad and fertile valleys. For a few miles lofty hills arise on either hand, but their slopes are covered with woods and coppices, or present wide pastures alive with numberless sheep and cattle. The river hastens swiftly on its course, sparkling and foaming over every obstacle, and delighting

the ear with its glad murmur. Its banks abound with flowers, as Cotton noticed in his day :—

> " the beauty of her stream is such,
> As only with a swift and transient touch
> To enrich her steril borders as she glides,
> And force sweet flowers from her marble sides."

Drayton, too, speaks of " the Dove whose banks so fertile be." This fertilizing power of our river has passed into a proverb—

> " In April Dove's flood
> Is worth a king's good."

Few springs, indeed, pass over in which the meadows on either side are not overflowed, and the result is, as the rhyme says, singularly beneficial—when the flood is not so great as to be destructive, as sometimes happens.

We shall not lack variety if we follow our river among its many windings ; yet we must not tarry—the untiring stream keeping on its way with so constant a progress—nay, the very fish, as they flash along its bed, seem to chide our stay. We will on. For some few miles farther our Dove is essentially a sylvan stream, and affords many a fair picture of quiet beauty, such as seems fashioned for the musings of the contemplative man. The pretty little village and ivy-clad church of Okeover, with the gravestones dotting the side of the hill, and looking as if they were not enclosed within the narrow limits of a churchyard, will claim the rambler's attention, and another little church nearly opposite to it, on the Derby side of the Dove, will also not pass unnoticed. Okeover has a handsome mansion ; there are, too, a good many barrows and other antiquarian relics in its vicinity. But, as we said, *we*

must not linger. Just before we reach Ashbourn, a little stream runs into the river on our left—"a pretty river called Bently Brook, and is full of very good trout and grayling," as Piscator tells us.

Ashbourn is a neat little town and an agreeable one to stop at, as the neighbourhood affords many pretty walks; but probably the Dove rambler will be content, like Viator, with merely calling there. He will not find the Talbot standing now, but there are plenty other inns as good, where he may have a "flagon of the country liquor, Derbyshire ale, if he please." Not but what now, as then, "you may drink worse French wine in many taverns in London than they have sometimes here," but probably the stranger will think, with Viator, "that a man should not come from London to drink wine in the Peak." And he will *not* find now that "Ashbourn has, which is a kind of riddle, always in it the best malt and the worst ale in England," as Piscator said of it a century and a half ago. The Talbot, where the travellers stopped, was in the market-place; it was pulled down in 1786. Ashbourn is surrounded by high hills, which afford some striking views. The church, which was erected in the thirteenth century, is a remarkably fine one, with a lofty and very handsome spire. It contains some curious ancient monuments, chiefly to various members of the Cockayne family—the former possessors of Ashbourn Hall. The celebrated monument, by Banks, to Penelope, the only daughter of Sir Brook Boothby, is also deposited here. It is an affecting yet simple and graceful representation of the dying child turning over on her couch in the restlessness of pain. An inscription underneath says, that "The unfortunate pa-

rents ventured their all in this frail bark, and the wreck was total." A gloomy inscription: but its gloominess is lessened somewhat by its repetition in some three or four languages. The afflicted father gave further vent to his grief in a volume of poems entitled 'Sorrows sacred to Penelope.' The visitor who takes any delight in looking at "poets' houses" may see the cottage in which Moore wrote his 'Lalla Rookh,' not far from Ashbourn. The views about the river, especially near Hangingbridge, are exceedingly picturesque—cottages, mills, a rustic bridge, the broken banks, and distant mountains, a few milk-maids in bright red gowns, and a well-equipped fly-fisher or two, combine to make up some pleasant, though not very magnificent *tableaux*.

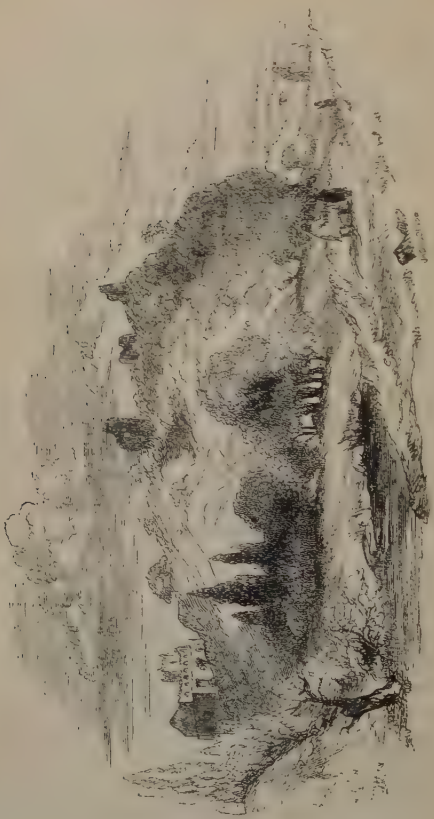
We may rejoin the Dove from Ashbourn by keeping alongside Henmore brook, which is, as Cotton says, a very pretty little river. The Dove runs past Snelston and Norbury, where we need not stay. From the latter place to Bocester the scenery is somewhat rougher and more striking, especially towards Bocester. The rambler will be repaid by a stroll about this village and the sandstone hill above it. On the Derbyshire side of the river, along Eaton Dove-dale and Dove-cliff, the scenery is rather wild in parts, and in others exceedingly beautiful. The few miles from Norbury to Eaton Dove-dale should on no account be missed; they are not indeed comparable with the grander dales we have already traversed, but they are such as would take high rank anywhere else, and they are the last of a striking character we shall meet with on our journey down the Dove. A prettier pastoral landscape than you have as you look back

upon Bocester, after you have passed it about a quarter of a mile, can hardly be met with. Groups of noble trees occupy and give firmness to the mid-distance, between and above which appear a few straggling roofs of the irregular village, and the square tower of the antique church; curling wreaths of smoke indicate the position of some unseen cottages, and beyond all rise the dim hills of the distant moor-lands: in the foreground the transparent river rumbles over its stony bed, while a few cattle standing in its waters, under the shade of the old alders, and an angler or two, and a host of rapid martins skimming over its surface, complete the picture.

Uttoxeter, which lies a short way from our river, on the Staffordshire side, is a town of some importance. It is long and bustling, but has nothing at all noticeable, or at least nothing remembrable about it. From the bridge, which lies between it and Dove-ridge, the view up the river is very fine, the distance being filled up with the Wever hills and Peak mountains; but the scenery hereabouts is everywhere very beautiful. Dove-ridge contains a noble park, with wide-stretching lands and famous trees, and is altogether a pleasant place, and there is a neat inn (called, if we remember aright, the "Anchor and White Hart"), where the fisherman or pedestrian will find comfortable accommodation and a "neat-handed Phillis," no unpleasant thing after a long day by the river's side. A little farther along the river is Sudbury, which contains a fine house and extensive park, belonging to Lord Vernon. The building is a large red brick structure, and a rather fine specimen of the baronial architecture of the Stuart

period. Our river from Sudbury to Tutbury pursues a most tortuous and wayward course, and we shall leave it to take its wanton way unattended.

Tutbury Castle is a prominent object from the river: it stands on the summit of a bold cliff, which ends abruptly at its northern extremity. Its history is rather interesting, but we must content ourselves with the most bald outline. A castle existed at Tutbury in Saxon times, and is mentioned in Domesday; but it was destroyed by the Danes in one of their incursions into this part of the island. It remained a ruin till the period of the Conquest, when William gave it and other large estates in this county to Henry de Ferrars, one of his noble Norman followers. Ferrars rebuilt the castle on a magnificent scale. It remained in the possession of the Ferrars family till the reign of Henry III., when its lord was pronounced a traitor, and his estates forfeited. Henry gave Tutbury castle to his second son, Edmund Plantagenet, Earl of Lancaster, whose successor Thomas, second Earl of Lancaster, repaired it, and rendered it a splendid residence. His style of living here is spoken of as most princely, and that it was so may be readily supposed when it is stated that his household expenses in the year 1313 amounted to 22,000*l.*, an almost incredible sum when the difference in the price of provisions at that time is borne in mind. Thomas, it will be remembered, was the leader of the barons who conspired against the foolish Edward II., and who succeeded in depriving him of his favourite Gaveston, and afterwards causing him to banish the next unworthy minion, Hugh le Despencer. But soon after the banishment of Le Despencer, the king's party again made head,



[Tutbury Castle.]

and the barons were defeated in a battle at Boroughbridge. The Earl of Lancaster, with many others of note, was made prisoner, and soon after beheaded. Mackintosh calls him the Montfort of this reign, and his memory was long held in great esteem. He was canonized in 1389. Tutbury castle having fallen, by the attainder of the Earl of Lancaster, into the possession of the crown, it was given in succession to various parties; and at length passed into the hands of the famous John of Gaunt. On his marriage with the Lady Constance, Queen of Castile and Leon, he presented her with this castle, which he had restored and fitted up with great magnificence. Here she fixed her residence, and appears to have kept a splendid court. With the other estates pertaining to the Duchy of Lancaster, it became the property of the crown when Henry Bolingbroke ascended the throne. From this time there is nothing of consequence recorded concerning Tutbury castle, except that Henry VII. occasionally resided in it for the sake of hunting in the neighbouring forest of Nerewood, till the reign of Elizabeth, when it was for awhile made the prison of Mary Queen of Scots. That unhappy princess was not confined for any very long period together at Tutbury, but she was brought here three or four different times, and she appears to have been treated with much consideration while she remained here. James I. often visited Tutbury, like Henry, for the sake of hunting in Nerewood forest. Charles I. spent a fortnight here before the commencement of his troubles, and afterwards, with Prince Rupert, took up his abode in the castle, while his army encamped at the foot of the hill and in the surrounding coun-

try. This was a few weeks before the battle of Naseby; a few weeks after it he returned to the castle, but instead of having a noble army along with him, he was attended only by about a hundred men. Tutbury castle held out for the king after most of the other strongholds in Staffordshire had yielded to the parliament. But it was at last forced to yield also, and the victorious party razed the fortifications. It has remained a ruin ever since. The parts left are rather fine, but too scattered to allow it to be considered one of the most picturesque ruins. The massive keep was ruinous when Mary was a prisoner here: little now remains of the castle but one or two tower-like gateways and broken walls. A portion less injured and more modern-looking than the rest is converted into a farm-house. The area enclosed by the buildings was about three acres; and, from its position and the skilful manner in which the defensive portions were constructed, Tutbury castle was a place of uncommon strength. There was a moat around it, but it is now dry. The view from he keep is a very fine one.

The Dove flows onward a wider and rapid river, through pleasant and fertile meadows for the rest of its course. It passes Eggington, whose heath is famous as the spot on which a fierce battle was fought between the Royalist and Commonwealth soldiers, when the latter were defeated and driven across the Trent. Just below Eggington, and nearly opposite Bladon Castle, a modern castellated building, more happy in its situation than in its architecture, the Dove joins

"The crystal Trent, for fords and fish renown'd."

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